

The Heritage of Literature Series

SECTION A NO. 18

THE POETS' PATH

THE POETS' WAY

STAGE I *and* STAGE II

Stages I and II in one volume

THE POETS' HARVEST

Being Stage III of

THE POETS' WAY

THE POETS' COMPANY

COMPLETE EDITION

And in Two Parts

VOL. I. THE POETS' COMPANY

TO THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

VOL. II. MODERN POETRY

MEREDITH TO SPENDER

THE POETS' PATH

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FOREWORD

From times immemorial, in all countries and in all tribes, the elders and leaders of the adult generation have had the wisdom to hand on their heritage of accumulated knowledge and the fruits of their experience. In this way "what is of value," whether wisely or unwisely selected, is preserved in rite and ceremony, in rhyme and dance, in customs and in the many other forms of folk-lore and literature. So it has always been, and thus we, too, should give full heed to all those things of value which tradition contributes to our civilization.

The stirring achievements of the past, in action, in thought and in wisdom, and the expression of vivid delight in the best things of all that there is around us—birds and beasts and flowers, sunrise and sunset, the earth, resting under the white light of the moon, starry skies, landscapes, seascapes, and clouds—all *these*, vividly apprehended, have an unknown and deep influence on that more urgent and more difficult art—the art of living. And that influence, adapting the mind to more adequate social behaviour, keeping it open to what is good and not blind to what is bad, and making it responsive to what is best in human nature, is absolutely essential for progress. The enlightenment and the creative efforts of the past can never work their effect

unless the growing generation is readily receptive to what is worth preserving—and is prevented from becoming dull, dried up, inert, self-satisfied, self-centred, unadventurous. All these things which we have considered show clearly that fairy stories, tales of action and imagination, adventure, and romance, nature poetry, rhymes, lilts and verses for miming and action, are essential for the child's full and well-balanced development.

In *The Poets' Path* we have a rich collection of story poems, poems of action, romance and imagination, songs, rhymes of humour, fun and puckish fancy. Here we have "all the fun of the fair": there are poems "penny plain and tuppence coloured", though there are many more "tuppence coloured" than "penny plain". And the fun of the fair is not limited to the numerous happy and amusing poems that are included here. Children also find fun in taking part in the variegated patterns of a wide range of experience. The taking part in the fun of the fair will, of course, be mainly an imaginative taking part—and that is most valuable. But it can also be a more active and realistic participation, for many of the stories and rhymes can be mimed, acted or interpreted chorally. It is clear that many of the poems in this volume are really good poetry, and therefore may not be treated as material for expression in action or even in chorus; but there is also much good stuff here which can be given freer treatment as it does not demand a finely perceptive enjoyment. At this stage it is more important to arouse and foster keen interest and whole-hearted effort than to attempt to develop niceties of æsthetic appreciation or subtle experiences.

We have here a book not only for ordinary class-room work (that is to say, enjoyment), but also for more idle moments. There is sufficient here for children to dip into frequently and not exhaust the ample supply. The large number of poems and verses, well within the powers of even slow readers, will no doubt lead the young traveller to explore further into the realms of imagination and heightened reality. And if he can be encouraged to make his own selection of favourite poems, and to begin to compile his own anthology and to *make* a poetry book of his own (which will contain some of his original work), then he may begin to regard poetry as a natural and true part of his personal life: thus can he be helped to avoid all those false and insincere poses and attitudes which are so often fostered by his pretending to like poetry or by his trying to give satisfaction because he wishes to be helpful.

So the real purpose of this book is to provide enjoyment. It is not a textbook, stocked with material for routine lessons and pedestrian tasks It is to be used with a keen sense of the importance of rhythm, of the expressiveness of poets' words—when spoken expressively, of lively, active imagery, and above all of the vitality of all the experiences which are presented in the poems here. If we ensure that our pupils come to literature with their minds alive and ready to apprehend all the poem can give them, we can trust the words of the poet to fulfil their purpose.

P. Gurrey.

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LIST OF AUTHORS

"SOOEEP!"

Black as a chimney is his face,
  And ivory white his teeth,
And in his brass-bound cart he rides,
  The chestnut blooms beneath.

"Sooeep, Sooeep!" he cries, and brightly peers
  This way and that, to see
With his two light-blue shining eyes
  What custom there may be

And once inside the house, he'll squat,
  And drive his rods on high,
Till twirls his sudden sooty brush
  Against the morning sky.

Then 'mid his bulging bags of soot,
  With half the world asleep,
His small cart wheels him off again,
  Still hoarsely bawling, "Sooeep!"

WALTER DE LA MARE

THE SPANISH MAIN

I've asked a great many people,
  But nobody seems to know,
How the pirates kept their Christmas
  In the days of long ago.

How many loaded galleons
  On Christmas Day they sank,
And how many merchant seamen
  They made to walk the plank.

Or whether they chanted carols
  As round the decks they rolled,
And made each other presents
  Out of their hoards of gold;

And covered a mast with green leaves
  And called it a Christmas-tree,
And hung it with shining sequins[1]
  On the shore of a tropical sea.

And lit the rum round the pudding
  And cursed in a kindly way,
But refused to do any business
  Because it was Christmas Day.

[1] An ancient gold coin of Venice.

I've asked a great many people,
But nobody seems to know,
How the pirates kept their Christmas
In the days of long ago.

E. V. KNOX

THE WISE MEN OF GOTHAM

In a bowl to sea went wise men three,
On a brilliant night of June:
They carried a net, and their hearts were set
On fishing up the moon.

The sea was calm, the air was balm,
Not a breath stirred low or high,
And the moon, I trow,[1] lay as bright below,
And as round as in the sky.

The wise men with the current went
Nor paddle nor oar had they,
And still as the grave they went on the wave,
That they might not disturb their prey.

Far, far at sea, were the wise men three,
When their fishing-net they threw;
And at the throw, the moon below
In a thousand fragments flew.

[1] Trust.

The sea was bright with a dancing light
  Of a million million gleams,
Which the broken moon shot forth as soon
  As the net disturbed her beams.

They drew in their net; it was empty and wet,
  And they had lost their pain;
Soon ceased the play of each dancing ray,
  And the image was round again.

Three times they threw, three times they drew,
  And all the while were mute;
And evermore their wonder grew,
  Till they could not but dispute.

Their silence they broke, and each one spoke
  Full long, and loud, and clear;
A man at sea their voices three
  Full three leagues off might hear.

The three wise men got home again
  To their children and their wives:
But, touching their trip, and their net's vain dip,
  They disputed all their lives.

The wise men three could never agree,
  Why they missed the promised boon;
They agreed alone that their net they had thrown,
  And they had not caught the moon.

THOMAS LOVE PEACOCK

BONNY GEORGE CAMPBELL

Hie upon Hielands,
  And laigh[1] upon Tay,
Bonny George Campbell
  Rade out on a day.

Saddled and bridled,
  Sae gallant to see;
Hame cam' his gude horse,
  But never cam' he.

Down ran his auld mither,
  Greetin'[2] fu' saer;
Out ran his bonny bride,
  Tearing her hair.

Saddled and bridled
  And booted rade he;
Toom[3] cam' his saddle,
  But never cam' he.

ANONYMOUS

[1] Low. [2] Lamenting. [3] Empty.

THE LOST SHOE

Poor little Lucy
  By some mischance,
Lost her shoe
  As she did dance.

'Twas not on the stairs,
  Not in the hall;
Not where they sat
  At supper at all.

She looked in the garden
  But there it was not;
Henhouse or kennel,
  Or high dovecote.
Dairy and meadow,
  And wild woods through
Showed not a trace
  Of Lucy's shoe.
Bird nor bunny
  Nor glimmering moon
Breathed a whisper
  Of where 'twas gone.
It was cried and cried,
  Oyez and Oyez![1]
In French, Dutch, Latin
  And Portuguese.

Ships the dark seas
  Went plunging through,
But none brought news
  Of Lucy's shoe.
And still she patters
  In silk and leather,

[1] Old French for "listen."

O'er snow, sand, shingle,
  In every weather;
Spain and Africa,
  Hindustan,
Java, China
  And lamped Japan;
Plains and desert
  She hops—hops through
Pernambuco
  To gold Peru;
Mountain and forest
  And river too,
All the world over
  For her lost shoe.

WALTER DE LA MARE

ARMIES IN THE FIRE

The lamps now glitter down the street;
Faintly sound the falling feet;
And the blue even slowly falls
About the garden trees and walls.

Now in the falling of the gloom
The red fire paints the empty room:
And warmly on the roof it looks,
And flickers on the backs of books.

Armies march by tower and spire
Of cities blazing, in the fire;—
Till as I gaze with staring eyes,
The armies fade, the lustre dies.

Then once again the glow returns;
Again the phantom city burns;
And down the red-hot valley, lo!
The phantom armies marching go!

Blinking embers, tell me true
Where are those armies marching to,
And what the burning city is
That crumbles in your furnaces!

R. L. STEVENSON

THE PIG'S TAIL

A furry coat has the bear to wear,
  The tortoise a coat of mail,
The yak has more than his share of hair,
  But—the pig has the curly tail.

The elephant's tusks are sold for gold,
  The slug leaves a silver trail,
The parrot is never too old to scold,
  But—the pig has the curly tail.

The lion can either roar or snore,
  The cow gives milk in a pail,

The dog can guard a door, and more,
  But—the pig has the curly tail.

The monkey makes you smile a while,
  The tiger makes you quail,
The fox has many a wile of guile,
  But—the pig has the curly tail.

For the rest of the beasts that prey or play,
  From tiny mouse to the whale,
There's much that I could say to-day,
  But—the pig has the curly tail.

NORMAN [illegible]

REEDS OF INNOCENCE

Piping down the valleys wild,
  Piping songs of pleasant glee,
On a cloud I saw a child,
  And he laughing said to me:

"Pipe a song about a Lamb!"
  So I piped with merry cheer.
"Piper, pipe that song again";
  So I piped: he wept to hear.

"Drop thy pipe, thy happy pipe;
  Sing thy songs of happy cheer":
So I sang the same again,
  While he wept with joy to hear.

"Piper, sit thee down and write
In a book, that all may read."
So he vanished from my sight,
And I pluck'd a hollow reed,

And I made a rural pen,
And I stain'd the water clear,
And I wrote my happy songs
Every child may joy to hear.

WILLIAM BLAKE

OLD RHYME

When the wind is in the East,
'Tis neither good for man nor beast;
When the wind is in the North,
The skilful fisher goes not forth;
When the wind is in the South,
It blows the bait in the fish's mouth;
When the wind is in the West,
Then 'tis at the very best.

ANONYMOUS

SHUT THE DOOR

Godfrey Gordon Gustavus Gore—
No doubt you've heard the name before—
Was a boy who never would shut a door!

The wind might whistle, the wind might roar,
And teeth be aching, and throats be sore,
But still he never would shut the door.

His father would beg, his mother implore,
"Godfrey Gordon Gustavus Gore,
We really *do* wish you would shut the door!"

They rigged out a shutter with sail and oar,
And threatened to pack off Gustavus Gore
On a voyage of penance to Singapore.

But he begged for mercy, and said, "No more!
Pray do not send me to Singapore
On a shutter, and then I will shut the door!"

"You will?" said his parents. "Then keep on
shore;
But mind you do! For the plague is sore
Of a fellow that never will shut the door—
Godfrey Gordon Gustavus Gore!"

WILLIAM BRIGHTY RANDS

GODOLPHIN HORNE

Who was cursed with the Sin of Pride, and Became a Boot-Black

Godolphin Horne was nobly born;
He held the human race in scorn,
And lived with all his sisters where
His father lived, in Berkeley Square.
And oh! the lad was deathly proud!
He never shook your hand or bowed,

But merely smirked and nodded thus:
How perfectly ridiculous!
Alas! That such affected tricks
Should flourish in a child of six!
(For such was young Godolphin's age.)
Just then, the Court required a page,
Whereat the Lord High Chamberlain
(The kindest and the best of men),
He went good-naturedly and took
A perfectly enormous book
Called *People Qualified to Be*
Attendant on His Majesty,
And murmured, as he scanned the list
(To see that no one should be missed),
" There's William Coutts has got the 'flu,
And Billy Higgs would never do,
And Guy de Vere is far too young,
And . . . wasn't D'Alton's father hung?
And as for Alexander Byng! . . .
I think I know the kind of thing,
A churchman, cleanly, nobly born,
Come let us say Godolphin Horne?
But hardly had he said the word
When murmurs of dissent were heard.
The King of Iceland's eldest son
Said, "Thank you! I am taking none!"
The aged Duchess of Athlone
Remarked, in her sub-acid tone,
"I doubt if he is what we need!"

With which the bishops all agreed;
And even Lady Mary Flood
(*So* kind, and oh! so *really* good)
Said, "No! He wouldn't do at all,
He'd make us feel a lot too small."
The Chamberlain said, ". . . Well, well, well!
No doubt you're right. . . . One cannot tell!"
He took his gold and diamond pen
And scratched Godolphin out again.
So now Godolphin is the boy
Who blacks the boots at the Savoy.

HILAIRE BELLOC

A WARNING

Three children sliding on the ice
  Upon a summer's day,
It so fell out they all fell in;
  The rest they ran away.

Now, had these children been at home,
  Or sliding on dry ground,
Ten thousand pounds to one penny
  They had not all been drowned.

You parents all that children have,
  And you that have got none,
If you would have them safe abroad,
  Pray keep them safe at home.

JOHN GAY

IF ALL THE WORLD WERE PAPER

If all the world were paper,
  And all the sea were ink,
And all the trees were bread and cheese,
  What should we do for drink?

If all the world were sand-o,
  Oh, then what should we lack-o?
If, as they say, there were no clay,
  How should we take tobacco?

If all our vessels ran-a,
  If none but had a crack;
If Spanish apes ate all the grapes,
  How should we do for sack?

If friars had no bald pates,
  Nor nuns had no dark cloisters;
If all the seas were beans and peas,
  How should we do for oysters?

If there had been no projects,
  Nor none that did great wrongs;
If fiddlers shall turn players all,
  How should we do for songs?

If all things were eternal,
  And nothing their end bringing;
If this should be, then how should we
  Here make an end of singing?

ANONYMOUS

POOR OLD HORSE

Once I was clothed in linsey[1] woolsey fine,
My mane it did hang down, and my coat it did shine,
But now I'm growing old, and nature doth decay,
My master frowns on me, and these words I heard him say,
"Poor old horse! You must die!"

I used to be kept all in the stable warm,
I had the best of shelter from cold and rain and harm;
But now in open meadow, a hedge I'm glad to find,
To shield my sides from tempest, from driving sleet and wind.
Poor old horse, let him die!

My shoulders once were sturdy, were glossy, smooth and round,
But now, alas! they're rotten, I'm not accounted sound.
As I have grown so aged, my teeth gone to decay,
My master frowns upon me; I often hear him say,
"Poor old horse, let him die!"

A groom upon me waited, on straw I snugly lay,
When fields were full of flowers, the air was sweet with hay;

[1] A cloth made of linen and wool mixed.

But now there's no good feeding prepared for me at all,
I'm forced to munch the nettles upon the kennel wall.
Poor old horse, let him die!

My hide unto the huntsman so freely I will give,
My body to the hounds, for I'd rather die than live;
I've followed them full often, aye! many a score of miles,
O'er hedges, walls, and ditches, nor blinked at gates and stiles.
Poor old horse! You must die!

Ye gentlemen of England, ye sportsmen good and bold,
All ye that love a hunter, remember him when old;
Oh, put him in your stable, and make the old boy warm,
And visit him, and pat him, and keep him out of harm,
Poor old horse, till he die.

OLD SONG

THREE JOLLY WELSHMEN

There were three jovial Welshmen,
As I have heard them say,

And they would go a-hunting
  Upon St. David's Day.

All the day they hunted,
  And nothing could they find
But a ship a-sailing,
  A-sailing with the wind.

One said it surely was a ship;
  The other, he said, nay;
The third declared it was a house
  With the chimney blown away.

And all the night they hunted,
  And nothing could they find
Except the moon a-gliding,
  A-gliding with the wind.

One said it surely was the moon;
  The other, he said, nay;
The third declared it was a cheese,
  And half o't cut away.

And all the day they hunted,
  And nothing could they find
Except a hedgehog in a bush,
  And that they left behind.

One said it was a hedgehog;
  The second, he said, nay;

The third it was a pin-cushion,
  And the pins stuck in wrong way.

Then all next night they hunted,
  And nothing could they find
Except a hare in a turnip field,
  And that they left behind.

One said it was a hare;
  The second he said, nay;
The third he said it was a calf,
  And the cow had run away.

And all next day they hunted,
  And nothing could they find
But an owl in a holly tree,
  And that they left behind

One said it surely was an owl;
  The other, he said, nay,
The third said 'twas an aged man,
  Whose beard was growing grey

ANONYMOUS

THE CHERRY-TREE CAROL

As Joseph was a-walking,
  He heard an angel sing
"This night shall be b[illegible]
  Our Heavenly King

"He neither shall be born
In housen nor in hall,
Nor in the place of Paradise,
But in an ox's stall.

"He neither shall be clothed
In purple nor in pall,[1]
But all in fair linen,
As were babies all.

"He neither shall be rocked
In silver nor in gold,
But in a wooden cradle
That rocks on the mould.

"He neither shall be christened
In white wine nor red
But with fair spring water,
With which we were christenèd."

ANONYMOUS

[1] Mantle or cloak.

THE PLAINT OF THE CAMEL

Canary-birds feed on sugar and seed,
Parrots have crackers to crunch;
And as for the poodles, they tell me the noodles
Have chicken and cream for their lunch.

But there's never a question
About MY digestion,
  ANYTHING does for me.

Cats, you're aware, can repose in a chair,
  Chickens can roost upon rails;
Puppies are able to sleep in a stable,
  And oysters can slumber in pails.
But no one supposes
A poor Camel dozes.
  ANY PLACE does for me.

Lambs are enclosed where it's never exposed,
  Coops are constructed for hens;
Kittens are treated to houses well heated,
  And pigs are protected by pens.
But a Camel comes handy
Wherever it's sandy,
  ANYWHERE does for me.

People would laugh if you rode a giraffe,
  Or mounted the back of an ox:
It's nobody's habit to ride on a rabbit,
  Or try to bestraddle a fox.
But as for a Camel, he's
Ridden by families—
  ANY LOAD does for me.

A snake is as round as a hole in the ground;
  Weasels are wavy and sleek;

And no alligator could ever be straighter
  Than lizards that live in a creek.
But a camel's all lumpy,
And bumpy, and humpy,
  ANY SHAPE does for me.

CHARLES EDWARD CARRYL

ROBIN HOOD AND THE TWO GREY FRIARS

Bold Robin has robed him in ghostly attire,
And forth he is gone like a holy friar,
  Singing, hey down, ho down, down, derry down:
And of two grey friars he soon was aware,
Regaling themselves with dainty fare,
  All on the fallen leaves so brown.

"Good morrow, good brothers," said bold Robin
    Hood,
"And what make you in good greenwood,
  Singing, hey down, ho down, down, derry down!
Now give me, I pray you, wine and food;
For none can I find in the good greenwood,
  All on the fallen leaves so brown."

"Good brother," they said, "we would give you full
    fain,
But we have no more than enough for twain,
  Singing, hey down, ho down, down, derry down."

"Then give me some money," said bold Robin Hood,
"For none can I find in the good greenwood,
  All on the fallen leaves so brown."

"No money have we, good brother," said they:
"Then," said he, "we three for money will pray,
  Singing, hey down, ho down, down, derry down:
And whatever shall come at the end of our prayer,
We three holy friars will piously share,
  All on the fallen leaves so brown."

"We will not pray with thee, good brother, God wot;
For truly, good brother, thou pleasest us not,
  Singing, hey down, ho down, down, derry down."
Then up they both started from Robin to run,
But down on their knees Robin pulled them each one,
  All on the fallen leaves so brown.

The grey friars prayed with a doleful face,
But bold Robin prayed with a right merry grace,
  Singing, hey down, ho down, down, derry down:
And when they had prayed their portmanteau he took,
And from it a hundred good angels[1] he shook
  All on the fallen leaves so brown.

[1] Old English gold coins

"The saints," said bold Robin, "have hearkened our prayer,
And here's a good angel apiece for your share;
If more you would have, you must win ere you wear,
Singing, hey down, ho down, down, derry down."
Then he blew his good horn with a musical cheer,
And fifty good bowmen came trooping full near,
And away the grey friars they bounded like deer,
All on the fallen leaves so brown.

THOMAS LOVE PEACOCK

HAND OVER HAND

A handy ship, and a handy crew,
Handy, my boys, so handy;
A handy ship, and a handy crew,
Handy, my boys, away oh.

A handy skipper and second mate, too,
Handy, my boys, so handy;
A handy skipper and second mate, too,
Handy, my boys, away oh.

A handy Bose,[1] and a handy Sails,[2]
Handy, my boys, so handy;
A handy Bose, and a handy Sails,
Handy, my boys, away oh.

ANONYMOUS

[1] Boatswain. [2] Sailmaker.

THE FAIRIES

Up the airy mountain,
  Down the rushy glen,
We daren't go a-hunting
  For fear of little men;
Wee folk, good folk,
  Trooping all together;
Green jacket, red cap,
  And white owl's feather!

Down along the rocky shore
  Some make their home,
They live on crispy pancakes
  Of yellow tide-foam;
Some in the reeds
  Of the black mountain-lake,
With frogs for their watch-dogs,
  All night awake.

High on the hill-top
  The old King sits;
He is now so old and grey
  He's nigh lost his wits.
With a bridge of white mist
  Columbkill he crosses,
On his stately journeys
  From Slieveleague to Rosses;

Or going up with music
  On cold starry nights,
To sup with the Queen
  Of the gay Northern Lights.

They stole little Bridget
  For seven years long;
When she came down again
  Her friends were all gone.

They took her lightly back,
  Between the night and morrow;
They thought that she was fast asleep,
  But she was dead with sorrow.
They have kept her ever since
  Deep within the lake,
On a bed of flag-leaves,
  Watching till she wake.

By the craggy hill-side,
  Through the mosses bare,
They have planted thorn-trees
  For pleasure here and there.
Is any man so daring
  As to dig them up in spite,
He shall find their sharpest thorns
  In his bed at night.

Up the airy mountain,
  Down the rushy glen,

We daren't go a-hunting
  For fear of little men;
Wee folk, good folk,
  Trooping all together;
Green jacket, red cap,
  And white owl's feather!

WILLIAM ALLINGHAM

THE ISLE OF LONE

Three dwarfs there were which lived in an isle,
  And the name of that isle was Lone,
And the names of the dwarfs were Alliolyle,
  Lallerie, Muziomone.

Alliolyle was green of een,[1]
  Lallerie light of locks,
Muziomone was mild of mien
  As ewes in April flocks.

Their house was small and sweet of the sea,
  And pale as the Malmsey wine;
Their bowls were three, and their beds were three
  And their nightcaps white were nine.

Their beds they were made of the holly-wood,
  Their combs of the tortoise's shell,
Three basins of silver in corners there stood,
  And three little ewers as well.

[1] Eyes.

Green rushes, green rushes lay thick on the floor,
For light beamed a gobbet of wax;
There were three wooden stools for whatever they wore
On their humpity-dumpity backs.

So each would lie on a drowsy pillow
And watch the moon in the sky—
And hear the parrot scream to the billow,
The billow roar reply.

Parrots of sapphire and sulphur and amber,
Scarlet and flame and green,
While five-foot apes did scramble and clamber
In the feathery-tufted treen.

All night long with bubbles a-glisten
The ocean cried under the moon,
Till ape and parrot, too sleepy to listen,
To sleep and slumber were gone.

Then from three small beds the dark hours' while
In a house in the Island of Lone
Rose the snoring of Lalleric, Alliolyle,
The snoring of Muziomone.

But soon as ever came peep of sun
On coral and feathery tree,
Three night-capped dwarfs to the surf would run
And soon were a-bob in the sea.

At six they went fishing, at nine they snared
  Young foxes in the dells,
At noon on sweet berries and honey they fared,
  And blew in their twisted shells.

Dark was the sea they gambolled in,
  And thick with silver fish,
Dark as green glass blown clear and thin
  To be a monarch's dish.

They sate to sup in a jasmine bower
  Lit pale with flies of fire,
Their bowls the hue of the iris-flower,
  And lemon their attire.

Sweet wine in little cups they sipped,
  And golden honeycomb
Into their bowls of cream they dipped
  Whipt light and white as foam.

Now Alliolyle, where the sandflower blows,
  Taught three old apes to sing—
Taught three old apes to dance on their toes
  And caper round in a ring

They yelled them hoarse and they croaked them
    sweet,
  They twirled them about and around,
To the noise of their voices they danced with their
    feet,
  They stamped with their feet on the ground.

But down to the shore skipped Lallerie,
  His parrot on his thumb,
And the twain they scritched in mockery
  While the dancers go and come.

And, alas! in the evening, rosy and still,
  Light-haired Lallerie
Bitterly quarrelled with Alliolyle
  By the yellow-sanded sea.

The rising moon swam sweet and large
  Before their furious eyes,
And they rolled and rolled to the coral marge
  Where the surf for ever cries.

Too late, too late, comes Muziomone:
  Clear in the clear green sea
Alliolyle lies not alone
  But clasped with Lallerie.

He blows on his shell plaintive notes;
  Ape, parraquito, bee
Flock where a shoe on the salt wave floats—
  The shoe of Lallerie.

He fetches nightcaps one and nine,
  Grey apes he dowers three,
His house as fair as the Malmsey wine
  Seems sad as the cypress-tree.

Three bowls he brims with sweet honeyco
  To feast the bumble bees,
Saying: "O bees, be this your home,
  For grief is on the seas!"

He sate him lone in a coral grot,
  At the flowing in of the tide;
When ebbed the billow, there was not,
  Save coral, aught beside.

So hairy apes in three white beds,
  And nightcaps, one and nine,
On moonlit pillows lay three heads
  Bemused[1] with dwarfish wine.

A tomb of coral, the dirge of bee,
  The grey apes' guttural groan
For Alliolyle, for Lallerie,
  For thee, O Muziomone!

WALTER DE LA MARE

[1] Stupefied.

MARCH

The cock is crowing,
The stream is flowing,
The small birds twitter,
The lake doth glitter,
The green field sleeps in the sun;

The oldest and youngest
Are at work with the strongest;
The cattle are grazing,
Their heads never raising;
There are forty feeding like one!

Like an army defeated
The snow hath retreated,
And now doth fare ill
On the top of the bare hill;
The ploughboy is whooping—anon—anon:
There's joy on the mountains;
There's life in the fountains;
Small clouds are sailing,
Blue sky prevailing;
The rain is over and gone!

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

THE DORMOUSE

The little Dormouse is tawny red;
He makes against winter a nice snug bed;
He makes his bed in a mossy bank,
Where the plants in summer grow tall and rank;
Away from the light, far underground,
His sleep through winter is quiet and sound;
And when all above him freezes and snows,
What is it to him, for he naught of it knows?

And till the cold time of the winter is gone,
The little Dormouse keeps sleeping on.

But at last, in the fresh breezy days of the spring,
When the green leaves bud, and the merry birds
sing,
And the dread of the winter is over and past,
The little Dormouse peeps out at last.
Out of his snug, quiet burrow he wends,
And looks all about for his neighbours and friends;
Then he says, as he sits at the foot of a larch,
"'Tis a beautiful day, for the first day of March!
The violet is blowing, the blue sky is clear;
The lark is upspringing, his carol I hear;
And in the green fields are the lamb and the foal;
I am glad I'm not sleeping now down in my hole!"

Then away he runs in his merry mood,
Over the fields and into the wood,
To find any grain there may chance to be,
Or any small berry that hangs on the tree.
So, from early morning till late at night,
Has this poor little creature its own delight,
Looking down to the earth and up to the sky,
Thinking, "Ah! what a happy Dormouse am I!"

MARY HOWITT

THE PALACE

(*From "Nymphidia"*)

This palace standeth in the air,
By necromancy[1] placèd there,
That it no tempest needs to fear
  Which way so ere it blow it;
And somewhat southward tow'rd the noon,
Whence lies a way up to the moon,
And thence the fairy can as soon
  Pass to the earth below it.

The walls of spiders' legs are made,
Well mortisèd[2] and finely laid;
He was the master of his trade
  It curiously that builded:
The windows of the eyes of cats,
And for the roof, instead of slats,
Is cover'd with the skins of bats,
  With moonshine that are gilded.

MICHAEL DRAYTON

[1] Magic.
[2] With the parts well fitted together.

THE QUEEN'S CHARIOT

(*From "Nymphidia"*)

Her chariot ready straight is made,
Each thing therein is fitting laid,

That she by nothing might be stay'd,
  For nought must be letting;[1]
Four nimble gnats the horses were,
Their harnesses of gossamer,
Fly Cranion her charioteer
  Upon the coachbox getting.

Her chariot of a snail's fine shell,
Which for the colours did excel,
The fair Queen Mab becoming well,
  So lively was the limning;[2]
The seat, the soft wool of the bee,
The cover, gallantly to see,
The wing of a pied butterfly;
  I trow 'twas simple trimming.

The wheels compos'd of crickets' bones
And daintily made for the nonce,[3]
For fear of rattling on the stones
  With thistle-down they shod it:
For all her maidens much did fear,
If Oberon had chance to hear
That Mab his Queen should have been there,
  He would not have abode it.

She mounts her chariot in a trice,
Nor would she stay for no advice,

[1] Hindering
[2] Drawing or painting
[3] For the present occasion

Until her maids, that were so nice,
  To wait on her were fitted,
But ran away herself alone;
Which when they heard, there was not one
But hasted after to be gone,
  As she had been diswitted.[1]

Hop and *Mop* and *Drop* so clear,
Pip and *Trip* and *Skip* that were
To *Mab* their sovereign ever dear,
  Her special Maids of Honour;
Fib and *Tib* and *Pinck* and *Pin*,
Tick and *Quick* and *Jill* and *Jin*,
Tit and *Nit* and *Wap* and *Win*,
  The train that wait upon her.

Upon a grasshopper they got,
And what with amble and with trot,
For hedge nor ditch they spared not,
  But after her they hie them;
A cobweb over them they throw,
To shield the wind if it should blow;
Themselves they wisely could bestow,
  Lest any should espy them.

MICHAEL DRAYTO[N]

[1] Lost her wits.

FROM A RAILWAY CARRIAGE

Faster than fairies, faster than witches,
Bridges and houses, hedges and ditches;
And charging along like troops in a battle,
All through the meadows the horses and cattle:
All of the sights of the hill and the plain
Fly as thick as driving rain;
And ever again, in the wink of an eye,
Painted stations whistle by.

Here is a child who clambers and scrambles,
All by himself and gathering brambles;
Here is a tramp who stands and gazes;
And there is the green for stringing the daisies!
Here is a cart run away in the road
Lumping along with man and load;
And here is a mill and there is a river:
Each a glimpse and gone for ever!

R. L. STEVENSON

THE FLATTERED FLYING-FISH

Said the Shark to the Flying-Fish over the phone:
"Will you join me to-night? I am dining alone.
Let me order a nice little dinner for two!
And come as you are, in your shimmering [illegible]"

Said the Flying-Fish: "Fancy remembering me,
And the dress that I wore at the Porpoises' tea!"
"How could I forget?" said the Shark in his guile:
"I expect you at eight!" and rang off with a smile.

She has powdered her nose; she has put on her
things;
She is off with one flap of her luminous wings.
O little one, lovely, light-hearted and vain,
The moon will not shine on your beauty again!

E. V. RIEU

THE SHIP OF RIO

There was a ship of Rio
Sailed out into the blue,
And nine and ninety monkeys
Were all her jovial crew.
From bo'sun to the cabin boy,
From quarter to caboose,[1]
There weren't a stitch of calico
To breech 'em—tight or loose;
From spar to deck, from deck to keel,
From barnacle to shroud,
There weren't one pair of reach-me-downs
To all that jabbering crowd.

[1] The ship's galley or kitchen.

But wasn't it a gladsome sight,
  When roared the deep-sea gales,
To see them reef her fore and aft,
  A-swinging by their tails!
Oh, wasn't it a gladsome sight,
  When glassy calm did come,
To see them squatting tailor-wise
  Around a keg of rum!
Oh, wasn't it a gladsome sight,
  When in she sailed to land,
To see them all a-scampering skip
  For nuts across the sand!

WALTER DE LA MARE

ROLL THE COTTON DOWN

(Hallıards)

Come roll the cotton down, my boys,
  Roll the cotton down;
Come roll the cotton down, my boys,
  O roll the cotton down.

Come hither, all you nigger boys,
  Roll the cotton down;
Come hither, all you bigger boys,
  O roll the cotton down.

ROLL THE COTTON DOWN

A dollar a day is a white man's pay,
  Roll the cotton down;
A dollar a day is a white man's pay,
  O roll the cotton down.

Ten dollars a day is a black man's pay,
  Roll the cotton down;
Ten dollars a day is a black man's pay,
  O roll the cotton down.

The white man's pay is rather high,
  Roll the cotton down;
The white man's pay is rather high,
  O roll the cotton down.

The black man's pay is rather low,
  Roll the cotton down;
The black man's pay is rather low,
  O roll the cotton down.

Around Cape Horn we're bound to go,
  Roll the cotton down;
Around Cape Horn we're bound to go,
  O roll the cotton down.

So stretch it aft and start a song,
  Roll the cotton down;
So stretch it aft and start a song,
  O roll the cotton down.

ANONYMOUS

WHEN ALL THE WORLD IS YOUNG

When all the world is young, lad,
  And all the trees are green;
And every goose a swan, lad,
  And every lass a queen;
Then hey for boot and horse, lad,
  And round the world away!
Young blood must have its course, lad,
  And every dog his day.

When all the world is old, lad,
  And all the trees are brown;
And all the sport is stale, lad,
  And all the wheels run down;
Creep home, and take your place there,
  The spent and maimed among·
God grant you find one face there,
  You loved when all was young.

CHARLES KINGSLEY

BARBARA FRIETCHIE

Up from the meadows rich with corn,
Clear in the cool September morn,
The clustered spires of Frederick stand
Green-walled by the hills of Maryland.

Round about them orchards sweep,
Apple and peach tree fruited deep,
Fair as the garden of the Lord
To the eyes of the famished rebel horde,

On that pleasant morn of the early fall
When Lee marched over the mountain-wall,—
Over the mountains winding down,
Horse and foot, into Frederick town.

Forty flags with their silver stars,
Forty flags with their crimson bars,
Flapped in the morning wind: the sun
Of noon looked down, and saw not one.

Up rose old Barbara Frietchie then,
Bowed with her fourscore years and ten;
Bravest of all in Frederick town,
She took up the flag the men hauled down;

In her attic window the staff she set,
To show that one heart was loyal yet.
Up the street came the rebel tread,
Stonewall Jackson riding ahead.

Under his slouched hat, left and right,
He glanced; the old flag met his sight.
"Halt!"—the dust-brown ranks stood fast.
"Fire!"—out blazed the rifle blast.

It shivered the window, pane and sash;
It rent the banner with seam and gash.
Quick, as it fell, from the broken staff
Dame Barbara snatched the silken scarf.

She leaned far out on the window sill,
And shook it forth with a royal will.
"Shoot, if you must, this old grey head,
But spare your country's flag," she said.

A shade of sadness, a blush of shame,
Over the face of the leader came;
The noble nature within him stirred
To life, at that woman's deed and word.

"Who touches a hair on yon grey head
Dies like a dog! March on!" he said.
All day long through Frederick Street
Sounded the tread of marching feet;

All day long the free flag toss'd
Over the heads of the rebel host;
Ever its torn folds rose and fell
On the loyal winds, that loved it well.

And through the hill-gaps sunset light
Shone over it with a warm good-night,
Barbara Frietchie's work is o'er,
And the rebel rides on his raids no more.

J. G. WHITTI

THE PICTURE

Here is a sea-legged sailor,
  Come to this tottering Inn,
Just when the bronze on its signboard is fading,
  And the black shades of evening begin.

With his head on thick paws sleeps a sheep-dog,
  There stoops the shepherd, and see,
All follow-my-leader the ducks waddle homeward,
  Under the sycamore tree.

Very brown is the face of the sailor,
  His bundle is crimson, and green
Are the thick leafy boughs that hang dense o'er
    the tavern,
  And blue the far meadows between.

But the crust, ale, and cheese of the sailor,
  His mug and his platter of delf,
And the crescent to light home the shepherd and
    sheep-dog,
  The painter has kept to himself.

WALTER DE LA MARE

THE GREENWICH PENSIONER

'Twas in the good ship *Rover*,
  I sailed the world all round,

And for three years and over
  I ne'er touched British ground.
At length in England landed,
  I left the roaring main,
Found all relations stranded,
  And went to sea again,
  And went to sea again.

That time bound straight for Portugal,
  Right fore and aft we bore,
But when we made Cape Ortegal,
  A gale blew off the shore.
She lay, so did it shock her,
  A log upon the main;
Till, saved from Davy's locker
  We put to sea again,
  We put to sea again.

Next sailing in a frigate
  I got my timber toe.
I never more shall jig it
  As once I used to do.
My leg was shot off fairly
  All by a ship of Spain;
But I could swab the galley,
  I went to sea again,
  I went to sea again.

And still I am enabled
  To bring up in the rear,

Although I'm quite disabled
  And lie in Greenwich tier.
There's schooners in the river,
  A-riding to the chain,
But I shall never, ever
  Put out to sea again,
  Put out to sea again.

ANONYMOUS

LONE DOG

I'm a lean dog, a keen dog, a wild dog, and lone;
I'm a rough dog, a tough dog, hunting on my own;
I'm a bad dog, a mad dog, teasing silly sheep;
I love to sit and bay the moon, to keep fat souls from sleep.

I'll never be a lap dog, licking dirty feet,
A sleek dog, a meek dog, cringing for my meat;
Not for me the fireside, the well-filled plate,
But shut door, and sharp stone, and cuff, and kick, and hate.

Not for me the other dogs, running by my side;
Some have run a short while, but none of them would bide.
O mine is still the lone trail, the hard trail, the best,
Wide wind, and wild stars, and the hunger of the quest!

IRENE MCLEOD

THE KNIGHT'S LEAP

A Legend of Altenahr

So the foemen have fired the gate, men of mine;
  And the water is spent and gone?
Then bring me a cup of the red Ahr-wine:
  I never shall drink but this one.

And fetch me my harness, and saddle my horse,
  And lead him me round to the door·
He must take such a leap to-night perforce,
  As horse never took before.

I have lived by the saddle for years a score:
  And if I must die on tree,
The old saddle tree, which has borne [illegible]
  Is the properest timber for me.

I have lived my life, I have fough[illegible]
  I have drunk my share of [illegible]
From Trier to Coln there was [illegible]
  Led a merrier life than [illegible]

So now to show bishop, [illegible]
  How the Altenahr [illegible]
If they smoke the [illegible]
  He must take to [illegible]

He harnessed himself by the clear moonshine,
  And he mounted his horse at the door;
And he drained such a pull at the red Ahr-wine,
  As never man took before.

He spurred the old horse, and he held him tight,
  And he leapt him out over the wall;
Out over the cliff, out into the night,
  Three hundred feet of fall.

They found him next morning below in the glen,
  With never a bone in him whole—
But heaven may yet have more mercy than men,
  For such a bold rider's soul.

CHARLES KINGSLEY

MICHAEL'S SONG

Because I set no snare
But leave them flying free,
All the birds of the air
Belong to me.

From the blue-tit on the sloe
To the eagle on the height,
Uncaged they come and go
For my delight.

And so the sunward way
I soar on the eagle's wings,

Attempted to believe Matilda:
The effort very nearly killed her,
And would have done so, had not she
Discovered this infirmity.
For once, towards the close of day,
Matilda, growing tired of play,
And finding she was left alone,
Went tiptoe to the telephone,
And summoned the immediate aid
Of London's noble fire-brigade.
Within an hour the gallant band
Were pouring in on every hand,
From Putney, Hackney Downs, and Bow
With courage high and hearts a-glow
They galloped, roaring through the town,
" Matilda's house is burning down! "
Inspired by British cheers and loud
Proceeding from the frenzied crowd,
They ran their ladders through a score
Of windows on the ballroom floor;
And took peculiar pains to souse
The pictures up and down the house,
Until Matilda's aunt succeeded
In showing them they were not needed.
And even then she had to pay
To get the men to go away!

. . . .

It happened that a few weeks later,
Her aunt was off to the theatre,

To see that interesting play,
The Second Mrs. Tanqueray.
She had refused to take her niece
To hear this entertaining piece:
A deprivation just and wise,
To punish her for telling lies.
That night a fire *did* break out—
You should have heard Matilda shout!
You should have heard her scream and bawl,
And throw the window up and call
To people passing in the street—
(The rapidly increasing heat
Encouraging her to obtain
Their confidence)—but all in vain!
For every time she shouted "Fire!"
They only answered "Little liar!"
And therefore when her aunt returned,
Matilda, and the house, were burned

HILAIRE BELLOC

EARL HALDAN'S DAUGHTER

It was Earl Haldan's daughter,
  She looked across the sea;
She looked across the water;
  And long and loud laughed she:
The locks of six princesses
  Must be my marriage fee,

Attempted to believe Matilda:
The effort very nearly killed her,
And would have done so, had not she
Discovered this infirmity.
For once, towards the close of day,
Matilda, growing tired of play,
And finding she was left alone,
Went tiptoe to the telephone,
And summoned the immediate aid
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Until Matilda's aunt succeeded
In showing them they were not needed.
And even then she had to pay
To get the men to go away!

. . . .

It happened that a few weeks later,
Her aunt was off to the theatre,

So hey bonny boat, and ho bonny boat!
 Who comes a-wooing me? "

It was Earl Haldan's daughter,
 She walked along the sand;
When she was aware of a knight so fair
 Come sailing to the land.
His sails were all of velvet,
 His mast of beaten gold,
And " Hey bonny boat, and ho bonny boat
 Who saileth here so bold? "

" The locks of five princesses
 I won beyond the sea;
I clipt their golden tresses,
 To fringe a cloak for thee.
One handful yet is wanting,
 But one of all the tale;[1]
So hey bonny boat, and ho bonny boat!
 Furl up thy velvet sail! "

He leapt into the water,
 That rover young and bold,
He gript Earl Haldan's daughter,
 He clipt her locks of gold:
" Go weep, go weep, proud maiden,
 The tale is full to-day.
Now hey bonny boat, and ho bonny boat!
 Sail Westward ho! away! "

CHARLES KINGSLEY

[1] Number.

THE OUTLAW

(From "Rokeby")

O, Brignal banks are wild and fair,
  And Greta woods are green,
And you may gather garlands there
  Would grace a summer queen.
And as I rode by Dalton Hall
  Beneath the turrets high,
A maiden on the castle wall
  Was singing merrily:—

Chorus

"O, Brignal banks are fresh and fair,
  And Greta woods are green;
I'd rather rove with Edmund there,
  Than reign our English queen."

—"If, maiden, thou wouldst wend with me,
  To leave both tower and town,
Thou first must guess what life lead we
  That dwell by dale and down.
And if thou canst that riddle read,
  As read full well you may,
Then to the greenwood shalt thou speed
  As blithe as Queen of May."

Chorus

Yet sung she, "Brignal banks are fair,
  And Greta woods are green;

I'd rather rove with Edmund there,
  Than reign our English queen

"I read you, by your bugle-horn
  And by your palfrey good,
I read you for a ranger sworn
  To keep the king's greenwood."
—"A ranger, lady, winds his horn,
  And 'tis at peep of light;
His blast is heard at merry morn,
  And mine at dead of night."

Chorus

Yet sung she, "Brignal banks are fair,
  And Greta woods are gay;
I would I were with Edmund there
  To reign his Queen of May!

"With burnish'd brand[1] and musketoon[2]
  So gallantly you come.
I read you for a bold dragoon
  That lists the tuck of drum."
—"I list no more the tuck of drum,
  No more the trumpet hear;
But when the beetle sounds his hum,
  My comrades take the spear.

Chorus

"And oh! though Brignal banks be fair
  And Greta woods be gay,

[1] A sword. [2] A short musket.

Yet mickle[1] must the maiden dare
  Would reign my Queen of May!

"Maiden! a nameless life I lead,
  A nameless death I'll die;
The fiend, whose lantern lights the mead
  Were better mate than I!
And when I'm with my comrades met
  Beneath the greenwood bough
What once we were we all forget,
  Nor think what we are now."

Chorus

"Yet Brignal banks are fresh and fair,
  And Greta woods are green,
And you may gather garlands there
  Would grace a summer queen."

SIR WALTER SCOTT

[1] Much

AS I LAYE A-THYNKYNGE

The Last Lines of Thomas Ingoldsby

As I laye a-thynkynge, a-thynkynge, a-thynkynge,
Merrie sang the Birde as she sat upon the spraye;
    There came a noble Knyghte,
    With his hauberke[1] shynynge brighte,

[1] Coat of mail

And his gallant heart was lyghte,
Free and gaye;
As I lay a-thynkynge, he rode upon his waye.

As I laye a-thynkynge, a-thynkynge, a-thynkynge,
Sadly sang the Birde as she sat upon the tree!
There seem'd a crimson plain,
Where a gallant Knyghte laye slayne,
And a steed with broken rein
Ran free,
As I laye a-thynkynge, most pitiful to see!

As I laye a-thynkynge, a-thynkynge, a-thynkynge,
Merrie sang the Birde as she sat upon the boughe;
A lovely Mayde came bye
And a gentil youth was nyghe,
And he breathed many a syghe
And a vowe;
As I laye a-thynkynge her heart was gladsome now.

As I laye a-thynkynge, a-thynkynge, a-thynkynge,
Sadly sang the Birde as she sat upon the thorne;
No more a Youth was there,
But a Maiden rent her haire,
And cried in sadde despaire,
"That I was borne!"
As I laye a-thynkynge she perished forlorne.

As I laye a-thynkynge, a-thynkynge, a-thynkynge,
Sweetly sang the Birde as she sat upon the briar;

THE RIVALS

I heard a bird at dawn
Singing sweetly on a tree,
That the dew was on the lawn,
And the wind was on the lea;
But I didn't listen to him,
For he didn't sing to me!

I didn't listen to him,
For he didn't sing to me
That the dew was on the lawn,
And the wind was on the lea!
I was singing at the time
Just as prettily as he!

I was singing all the time,
Just as prettily as he,
About the dew upon the lawn,
And the wind upon the lea!
So I didn't listen to him,
As he sang upon a tree!

JAMES STEPHENS

THE NEW DUCKLING

"I want to be new," said the duckling.
"Oh, ho!" said the wise old owl,

While the guinea-pig cluttered off chuckling
  To tell all the rest of the fowl.

"I should like a more elegant figure,"
  That child of a duck went on.
"I should like to grow bigger and bigger,
  Until I could swallow a swan.

"I *won't* be the bond-slave of habit.
  I *won't* have those webs on my toes.
I want to run round like a rabbit,
  A rabbit as red as a rose.

"I *don't* want to waddle like mother,
  Or quack like my silly old dad.
I want to be utterly other,
  And *frightfully* modern and mad."

"Do you know," said the turkey, "you're quacking
  There's a fox creeping up thro' the rye;
And, if you're not utterly lacking,
  You'll make for that duck-pond. Good-bye?"

But the duckling was perky as perky.
  "Take care of your stuffing!" he called.
(This was horribly rude to a turkey!)
  "But you aren't a real turkey," he bawled.

"You're an early-Victorian sparrow!
  A fox is more fun than a sheep!

THE RIVALS

I heard a bird at dawn
Singing sweetly on a tree,
That the dew was on the lawn,
And the wind was on the lea;
But I didn't listen to him,
For he didn't sing to me!

I didn't listen to him,
For he didn't sing to me
That the dew was on the lawn,
And the wind was on the lea!
I was singing at the time
Just as prettily as he!

I was singing all the time,
Just as prettily as he,
About the dew upon the lawn,
And the wind upon the lea!
So I didn't listen to him,
As he sang upon a tree!

JAMES STEPHENS

THE NEW DUCKLING

"I want to be new," said the duckling.
"Oh, ho!" said the wise old owl,

While the guinea-pig cluttered off chuckling
  To tell all the rest of the fowl.

"I should like a more elegant figure,"
  That child of a duck went on.
"I should like to grow bigger and bigger,
  Until I could swallow a swan.

"I *won't* be the bond-slave of habit.
  I *won't* have those webs on my toes.
I want to run round like a rabbit,
  A rabbit as red as a rose.

"I *don't* want to waddle like mother,
  Or quack like my silly old dad.
I want to be utterly other,
  And *frightfully* modern and mad."

"Do you know," said the turkey, "you're quacking!
  There's a fox creeping up thro' the rye;
And, if you're not utterly lacking,
  You'll make for that duck-pond Good-bye?"

But the duckling was perky as perky.
  "Take care of your stuffing!" he called.
(This was horribly rude to a turkey!)
  "But you aren't a real turkey," he bawled.

"You're an early-Victorian sparrow!
  A fox is more fun than a sheep!

I shall show that my mind is not narrow
  And give him my feathers—to keep."

Now the curious end of this fable,
  So far as the rest ascertained,
Though they searched from the barn to the stable,
  Was that *only his feathers remained.*

So he *wasn't* the bond-slave of habit,
  And he *didn't* have webs on his toes;
And *perhaps* he runs round like a rabbit,
  A rabbit as red as a rose.

ALFRED NOYES

POCAHONTAS

Wearied arm and broken sword
  Wage in vain the desperate fight;
Round him press a countless horde,
  He is but a single knight.
Hark! a cry of triumph shrill
  Through the wilderness resounds,
  As, with twenty bleeding wounds,
Sinks the warrior, fighting still.

Now they heap the fatal pyre,
  And the torch of death they light:
Ah! 'tis hard to die of fire!
  Who will shield the captive knight?

Round the stake with fiendish cry
  Wheel and dance the savage crowd,
  Cold the victim's mien and proud,
And his breast is bared to die.

Who will shield the fearless heart?
  Who avert the murderous blade?
From the throng, with sudden start,
  See there springs an Indian maid.
Quick she stands before the knight;
  "Loose the chain, unbind the ring;
  I am daughter of the King,
And I claim the Indian right!"

Dauntlessly aside she flings
  Lifted axe and thirsty knife;
Fondly to his heart she clings,
  And her bosom guards his life!
In the woods of Powhattan,
  Still 'tis told, by Indian fires,
  How a daughter of their sires
Saved the captive Englishman.

W. M. THACKERAY

THE DISCOVERER OF THE NORTH CAPE

(From King Alfred's "Orosius")

Othere, the old sea-captain,
  Who dwelt in Helgoland,

To King Alfred, the Lover of Truth,
Brought a snow-white walrus-tooth,
  Which he held in his brown right hand.

His figure was tall and stately,
  Like a boy's his eye appeared;
His hair was yellow as hay,
But threads of a silvery grey
  Gleamed in his tawny beard.

Hearty and hale was Othere,
  His cheek had the colour of oak;
With a kind of a laugh in his speech,
Like the sea-tide on a beach,
  As unto the King he spoke.

And Alfred, King of the Saxons,
  Had a book upon his knees,
And wrote down the wondrous tale
Of him who was first to sail
  Into the Arctic seas.

"So far I live to the northward,
  No man lives north of me;
To the east are wild mountain-chains,
And beyond them meres[1] and plains;
  To the westward all is sea.

"So far I live to the northward,
  From the harbour of Skeringes-hale,

[1] Lakes.

If you only sailed by day,
With a fair wind all the way,
More than a month would you sail.

"I own six hundred reindeer,
With sheep and swine beside;
I have tribute from the Finns,
Whalebone and reindeer-skins,
And ropes of walrus-hide.

"I ploughed the land with horses
But my heart was ill at ease,
For the old seafaring men
Came to me now and then,
With their sagas[1] of the seas:—

"Of Iceland and of Greenland,
And the stormy Hebrides,
And the undiscovered deep;—
I could not eat nor sleep
For thinking of those seas.

"To the northward stretched the desert,
How far I fain would know;
So at last I sallied forth,
And three days sailed due north,
As far as the whale-ships go.

"To the west of me was the ocean,
To the right the desolate shore,

[1] Tales or legends.

But I did not slacken sail
For the walrus or the whale
  Till after three days more.

" The days grew longer and longer,
  Till they became as one,
And northward through the haze
I saw the sullen blaze
  Of the red midnight sun.

" And then uprose before me,
  Upon the water's edge,
The huge and haggard shape
Of that unknown North Cape,
  Whose form is like a wedge.

" The sea was rough and stormy,
  The tempest howled and wailed,
And the sea-fog, like a ghost,
Haunted that dreary coast,
  But onward still I sailed.

" Four days I steered to eastward,
  Four days without a night:
Round in a fiery ring
Went the great sun, O King,
  With red and lurid light."

Here Alfred, King of the Saxons,
  Ceased writing for a while;

And raised his eyes from his book,
With a strange and puzzled look,
  And an incredulous smile.

But Othere, the old sea-captain,
  He neither paused nor stirred,
Till the King listened, and then
Once more took up his pen,
  And wrote down every word.

"And now the land," said Othere,
  "Bent southward suddenly,
And I followed the curving shore
And ever southward bore
  Into a nameless sea.

"And there we hunted the walrus,
  The narwhale, and the seal;
Ha! 'twas a noble game,
And like the lightning's flame
  Flew our harpoons of steel.

"There were six of us altogether,
  Norsemen of Helgoland;
In two days and no more
We killed of them threescore,
  And dragged them to the strand!"

Here Alfred, the Truth-Teller,
  Suddenly closed his book,

And lifted his blue eyes,
With doubt and strange surmise
  Depicted in their look.

And Othere, the old sea-captain,
  Stared at him wild and weird,
Then smiled, till his shining teeth
Gleamed white from underneath
  His tawny, quivering beard.

And to the King of the Saxons,
  In witness of the truth,
Raising his noble head,
He stretched his brown hand, and said,
  "Behold this walrus-tooth!"

H. W. LONGFELLOW

BLOW, BULLIES, BLOW

(*Halliards*)

There's a Black Ball barque coming down the river
Blow, bullies, blow;
There's a Black Ball barque coming down the river
Blow, my bully boys, blow.

And who d'ye think is Captain of her?
Blow, bullies, blow;
O who d'ye think is Captain of her?
Blow, my bully boys, blow.

Why, bully Hains is the Captain of her,
Blow, bullies, blow;
Why, bully Hains is the Captain of her,
Blow, my bully boys, blow.

He'll make you wish you were dead and buried,
Blow, bullies, blow;
He'll make you wish you were dead and buried,
Blow, my bully boys, blow.

You'll brighten brass, and you'll scrape the cable,
Blow, bullies, blow;
You'll brighten brass, and you'll scrape the cable,
Blow, my bully boys, blow.

And who d'ye think is mate aboard her?
Blow, bullies, blow;
O who d'ye think is mate aboard her?
Blow, my bully boys, blow.

Santander James is the mate aboard her,
Blow, bullies, blow;
Santander James is the mate aboard her,
Blow, my bully boys, blow.

He'll ride you down like you ride the spanker,[1]
Blow, bullies, blow;
He'll ride you down like you ride the spanker,
Blow, my bully boys, blow.

[1]The after sail of a ship which flaps in the breeze.

And who d'ye think is the second mate of her?
Blow, bullies, blow;
O who d'ye think is the second mate of her?
Blow, my bully boys, blow.

Some ugly case who hates poor sailors,
Blow, bullies, blow;
Some ugly case who hates poor sailors,
Blow, my bully boys, blow.

ANONYMOUS

ELDORADO

Gaily bedight,
A gallant Knight,
In sunshine and in shadow
Had journeyed long,
Singing a song,
In search of Eldorado.

But he grew old—
This Knight so bold,—
And o'er his heart a shadow
Fell as he found
No spot of ground
That looked like Eldorado.

And, as his strength
Failed him at length,

He met a pilgrim shadow—
 "Shadow," said he,
 "Where can it be—
This land of Eldorado?"

 "Over the Mountains
 Of the Moon,
Down the Valley of the Shadow
 Ride, boldly ride,"
 The shade replied,—
"If you seek for Eldorado!"

EDGAR ALLAN POE

TONY THE TURTLE

Tony was a Turtle,
 Very much at ease,
Swimming in the sunshine
 Through the summer seas,
And feeding on the fishes
Irrespective of their wishes,
With a "By your leave" and "Thank you"
 And a gentlemanly squeeze.

Tony was a Turtle
 Who loved a civil phrase;
Anxious and obliging,
 Sensitive to praise.

And to hint that he was snappy
Made him thoroughly unhappy;
For Tony was a Turtle
  With most engaging ways.

Tony was a Turtle
  Who thought, before he fed,
Of other people's comfort,
  And as he ate them said:
"If I seem a little grumpy,
It is *not* that you are lumpy."
For Tony was a Turtle
  Delicately bred.

E. V. RIEU

BOADICEA

When the British warrior Queen,
  Bleeding from the Roman rods,
Sought, with an indignant mien,
  Counsel of her country's gods,

Sage beneath a spreading oak
  Sat the Druid, hoary chief;
Every burning word he spoke
  Full of rage and full of grief.

"Princess! if our aged eyes
  Weep upon thy matchless wrongs,

'Tis because resentment ties
  All the terrors of our tongues.

"Rome shall perish! Write that word
  In the blood that she has spilt;
Perish, hopeless and abhorr'd,
  Deep in ruin as in guilt.

"Rome, for empire far renown'd,
  Tramples on a thousand states;
Soon her pride shall kiss the ground,—
  Hark! the Gaul is at her gates!

"Other Romans shall arise,
  Heedless of a soldier's name;
Sounds, not arms, shall win the prize,
  Harmony the path to fame.

"Then the progeny that springs
  From the forests of our land,
Armed with thunder, clad with wings,
  Shall a wider world command.

"Regions Cæsar never knew
  Thy posterity shall sway;
Where his eagles never flew,
  None invincible as they."

Such the bard's prophetic words,
  Pregnant with celestial fire,

And to hint that he was snappy
Made him thoroughly unhappy;
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Such the bard's prophetic words,
  Pregnant with celestial fire,

Bending as he swept the chords
Of his sweet but awful lyre.

She, with all a monarch's pride,
Felt them in her bosom glow,
Rush'd to battle, fought and died;
Dying, hurl'd them at the foe:

"Ruffians, pitiless as proud,
Heaven awards the vengeance due;
Empire is on us bestowed,
Shame and ruin wait for you!"

WILLIAM COWPER

THE CATARACT OF LODORE[1]

"How does the water
Come down at Lodore?"
My little boy ask'd me
Thus, once on a time;
And moreover he task'd me
To tell him in rhyme
Anon at the word,
There came first one daughter
And then came another,
To second and third
The request of their brother,
And to hear how the water
Comes down at Lodore,
With its rush and its roar,
As many a time
They had seen it before.
So I told them in rhyme,
For of rhymes I had store:
And 'twas in my vocation
For their recreation
That so I should sing;

[1] A place in Cumberland by Lake Derwentwater

Bending as he swept the chords
  Of his sweet but awful lyre.

She, with all a monarch's pride,
  Felt them in her bosom glow,
Rush'd to battle, fought and died;
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As many a time
They had seen it before.
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For of rhymes I had store:
And 'twas in my vocation
For their recreation
That so I should sing;

[1] A place in Cumberland by Lake Derwentwater.

Because I was Laureate
To them and the King.

From its sources which well
In the Tarn[1] on the fell;
From its fountains
In the mountains,
Its rills and its gills;
Through moss and through brake,
It runs and it creeps
For a while, till it sleeps
In its own little Lake,
And thence at departing
Awakening and starting,
It runs through the reeds,
And away it proceeds,
Through meadow and glade,
In sun and in shade,
And through the wood-shelter,
Among crags in its flurry,
Helter-skelter,
Hurry-scurry.
Here it comes sparkling,
And there it lies darkling;
Now smoaking and frothing
Its tumult and wrath in,
Till in this rapid race
On which it is bent,

[1] A small lake in the mountains.

It reaches the place
Of its steep descent.

The cataract strong
Then plunges along,
Striking and raging
As if a war waging
Its caverns and rocks among:
Rising and leaping,
Sinking and creeping,
Swelling and sweeping,
Showering and springing,
Flying and flinging,
Writhing and ringing,
Eddying and whisking,
Spouting and frisking,
Twining and twisting,
  Around and around
  With endless rebound!
Smiting and fighting,
A sight to delight in,
Confounding, astounding,
Dizzying and deafening the ear with its
  sound.

Collecting, projecting,
Receding and speeding,
And shocking and rocking,
And darting and parting,

nd sounding and bounding and rounding,
nd bubbling and troubling and doubling,
nd grumbling and rumbling and tumbling,
nd clattering and battering and shattering;

reating and beating and meeting and sheeting,
aying and straying and playing and spraying,
vancing and prancing and glancing and dancing,
oiling, turmoiling and toiling and boiling,
d gleaming and steaming and streaming and
beaming
[illegible]
[illegible]
ad curling and whirling and purling and twirling,
ad thumping and plumping and bumping and
jumping,
ad dashing and flashing and splashing and clashing;
ad so never ending, but always descending,
unds and motions for ever and ever are blending,
l at once and all o'er, with a mighty uproar—
ad this way the water comes down at Lodore.

ROBERT SOUTHEY

THE NIGHT

The Night was creeping on the ground!
She crept and did not make a sound,

Until she reached the tree: And then
She covered it, and stole again

Along the grass beside the wall!
I heard the rustle of her shawl

As she threw blackness everywhere
Upon the sky, the ground, the air,

And in the room where I was hid!
But, no matter what she did

To everything that was without,
She could not put my candle out!

So I stared at the Night! And she
Stared back solemnly at me!

JAMES STEPHENS

THE SHELL

(*From "Maud"*)

See what a lovely shell,
Small and pure as a pearl,
Lying close to my foot,
Frail, but a work divine,
Made so fairily well
With delicate spire and whorl,
How exquisitely minute,
A miracle of design!

What is it? a learned man
Could give a clumsy name.
Let him name it who can,
The beauty would be the same.

The tiny cell is forlorn,
Void of the little living will
That made it stir on the shore.
Did he stand at the diamond door
Of his house in a rainbow frill?
Did he push, when he was uncurl'd,
A golden foot or a fairy horn
Thro' his dim water-world?

Slight, to be crush'd with a tap
Of my finger-nail on the sand,
Small, but a work divine,
Frail, but of force to withstand,
Year upon year, the shock
Of cataract seas that snap
The three-decker's oaken spine
Athwart the ledges of rock,
Here on the Breton strand!

ALFRED, LORD TENNYSON

PAUL REVERE'S RIDE

Listen, my children, and you shall hear
Of the midnight ride of Paul Revere,

On the eighteenth of April, in Seventy-five;
Hardly a man is now alive
Who remembers that famous day and year.

He said to his friend, "If the British march
By land or sea from the town to-night,
Hang a lantern aloft in the belfry arch
Of the North Church tower as a signal light,—
One, if by land, and two, if by sea;
And I on the opposite shore will be,
Ready to ride and spread the alarm
Through every Middlesex village and farm,
For the country folk to be up and to arm."

Then he said, "Good night!" and with muffled c
Silently rowed to the Charlestown shore,
Just as the moon rose over the bay,
Where swinging wide at her moorings lay
The Somerset, British man-of-war;
A phantom ship, with each mast and spar
Across the moon like a prison bar,
And a huge black hulk, that was magnified
By its own reflection in the tide.

Meanwhile, his friend, through alley and street,
Wanders and watches with eager ears,
Till in the silence around him he hears
The muster of men at the barrack door,
The sound of arms, and the tramp of feet,

And the measured tread of the grenadiers,
Marching down to their boats on the shore.

Then he climbed the tower of the Old North Church,
Up the wooden stairs, with stealthy tread,
To the belfry-chamber overhead,
And startled the pigeons from their perch
On the sombre rafters, that round him made
Masses and moving shapes of shade,—
By the trembling ladder, steep and tall,
To the highest window in the wall,
Where he paused to listen and look down
A moment on the roofs of the town,
And the moonlight flowing over all.

Beneath, in the churchyard, lay the dead,
In their night-encampment on the hill,
Wrapped in silence so deep and still
That he could hear, like a sentinel's tread,
The watchful night-wind, as it went,
Creeping along from tent to tent,
And seeming to whisper, "*All is well!*"
A moment only he feels the spell
Of the place and the hour, and the secret dread
Of the lonely belfry and the dead,
For suddenly all his thoughts are bent
On a shadowy something far away,
Where the river widens to meet the bay,—
A line of black that bends and floats
On the rising tide, like a bridge of boats.

Meanwhile, impatient to mount and ride,
Booted and spurred, with a heavy stride
On the opposite shore walked Paul Revere.
Now he patted his horse's side,
Now gazed at the landscape far and near,
Then, impetuous, stamped the earth,
And turned and tightened his saddle-girth;
But mostly he watched with eager search
The belfry-tower of the Old North Church,
As it rose above the graves on the hill,
Lonely and spectral and sombre and still.
And lo! as he looks, on the belfry's height
A glimmer, and then a gleam of light!
He springs to the saddle, the bridle he turns,
But lingers and gazes, till full on his sight
A second lamp in the belfry burns!

A hurry of hoofs in a village street,
A shape in the moonlight, a bulk in the dark,
And beneath, from the pebbles, in passing, a spark
Struck out by a steed flying fearless and fleet;
That was all! And yet, through the gloom and the light,
The fate of a nation was riding that night;
And the spark struck out by that steed, in his flight,
Kindled the land into flame with its heat.

He has left the village and mounted the steep,
And beneath him, tranquil and broad and deep,

Is the Mystic, meeting the ocean tides;
And under the alders, that skirt its edge,
Now soft on the sand, now loud on the ledge,
Is heard the tramp of his steed as he rides.

It was twelve by the village clock

[illegible]
And felt the damp of the river fog,
That rises after the sun goes down.

It was one by the village clock
When he galloped into Lexington.
He saw the gilded weathercock
Swim in the moonlight as he passed,
And the meeting-house windows, blank and bare,
Gaze at him with a spectral glare,
As if they already stood aghast
At the bloody work they would look upon.

It was two by the village clock
When he came to the bridge in Concord town.
He heard the bleating of the flock,
And the twitter of birds among the trees,
And felt the breath of the morning breeze
Blowing over the meadows brown.
And one was safe and asleep in his bed
Who at the bridge would be first to fall,

Who that day would be lying dead,
Pierced by a British musket-ball.

You know the rest. In the books you have read,
How the British Regulars fired and fled,—
How the farmers gave them ball for ball
From behind each fence and farmyard wall
Chasing the red-coats down the lane,
Then crossing the fields to emerge again
Under the trees at the turn of the road,
And only pausing to fire and load.
So through the night rode Paul Revere;
And so through the night went his cry of alarm
To every Middlesex village and farm,—
A cry of defiance, and not of fear,
A voice in the darkness, a knock at the door,
And a word that shall echo evermore!
For, borne on the night-wind of the Past,
Through all our history, to the last,
In the hour of darkness and peril and need,
The people will waken and listen to hear
The hurrying hoof-beats of that steed,
And the midnight message of Paul Revere.

HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW

THE DROMEDARY

In dreams I see the Dromedary still,
As once in a gay park I saw him stand:

A thousand eyes in vulgar wonder scanned
His humps and hairy neck, and gazed their fill
At his lank shanks and mocked with laughter shrill.
He never moved: and if his Eastern land
Flashed on his eye with stretches of hot sand,
It wrung no mute appeal from his proud will.
He blinked upon the rabble lazily;
And still some trace of majesty forlorn
And a coarse grace remained. His head was high,
Though his gaunt flanks with a great mange were worn;
There was not any yearning in his eye,
But on his lips and nostril infinite scorn.

A. Y. CAMPBELL

LORD LUNDY

Lord Lundy from his earliest years
Was far too freely moved to Tears.
For instance, if his Mother said,
"Lundy! It's time to go to Bed!"
He bellowed like a Little Turk.
Or if his father, Lord Dunquerque
Said, "Hi!" in a Commanding Tone,
"Hi, Lundy! Leave the Cat alone!"
Lord Lundy, letting go its tail,
Would raise so terrible a wail
As moved

His Grandpapa the Duke
To utter the severe rebuke:
"When I, Sir! was a little Boy,
An Animal was not a Toy!"
His father's Elder Sister, who
Was married to a Parvenoo,
Confided to Her Husband, "Drat!
The Miserable, Peevish Brat!
Why don't they drown the Little Beast?"
Suggestions which, to say the least,
Are not what we expect to hear
From Daughters of an English Peer.
His grandmamma, His Mother's Mother,
Who had some dignity or other,
The Garter, or no matter what,
I can't remember all the Lot!
Said, "Oh! that I were Brisk and Spry
To give him that for which to cry!"
(An empty wish, alas! for she
Was Blind and nearly ninety-three.)
The Dear Old Butler thought—but there!
I really neither know nor care
For what the Dear Old Butler thought!
In my opinion, Butlers ought
To know their place, and not to play
The Old Retainer night and day.
I'm getting tired and so are you,
Let's cut the Poem into two!

HILAIRE BELLOC

THE TWINS

In form and feature, face and limb,
  I grew so like my brother,
That folks got taking me for him,
  And each for one another.
It puzzled all our kith and kin,
  It reached a fearful pitch,
For one of us was born a twin,
  Yet not a soul knew which.

One day, to make the matter worse,
  Before our names were fixed,
As we were being washed by nurse,
  We got completely mixed;
And thus you see, by Fate's decree,
  Or rather nurse's whim,
My brother John got christened *me*,
  And I got christened *him*.

This fatal likeness even dogged
  My footsteps when at school.
And I was always getting flogged,
  For John turned out a fool.
I put this question hopelessly
  To everyone I knew,
"What *would* you do, if you were me,
  To prove that you were *you*?"

His Grandpapa the Duke
To utter the severe rebuke:
" When I, Sir! was a little Boy,
An Animal was not a Toy! "
His father's Elder Sister, who
Was married to a Parvenoo,
Confided to Her Husband, " Drat!
The Miserable, Peevish Brat!
Why don't they drown the Little Beast? "
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  To everyone I knew,
"What *would* you do, if you were me,
  To prove that you were you?"

Our close resemblance turned the tide
Of my domestic life;
For somehow my intended bride
Became my brother's wife.
In short, year after year, the same
Absurd mistakes went on;
And when I died, the neighbours came
And buried brother John!

H. S. LEIGH

JOCK OF HAZELDEAN

"Why weep ye by the tide, ladie?
Why weep ye by the tide?
I'll wed ye to my youngest son,
And ye sall be his bride:
And ye sall be his bride, ladie,
Sae comely to be seen"—
But ay she loot the tears down fa'
For Jock of Hazeldean.

"Now let this wilfu' grief be done,
And dry that cheek so pale;
Young Frank is chief of Errington,
And lord of Langley-dale;
His step is first in peaceful ha',
His sword in battle keen"—
But ay she loot the tears down fa'
For Jock of Hazeldean.

"A chain of gold ye sall not lack,
  Nor braid to bind your hair,
Nor mettled hound, nor managed hawk,
  Nor palfrey fresh and fair;
And you, the foremost o' them a',
  Shall ride our forest queen "—
But ay she loot the tears down fa'
  For Jock of Hazeldean.

The kirk was deck'd at morning-tide,
  The tapers glimmer'd fair;
The priest and bridegroom wait the bride,
  And dame and knight are there.
They sought her baith by bower and ha';
  The ladie was not seen!
She's o'er the Border, and awa'
  Wi' Jock of Hazeldean.

SIR WALTER SCOTT

OLD CROW

The bird in the corn
  Is a marvellous crow,
He was laid and was born
  In the season of snow;
And he chants his old catches
Like a ghost under hatches.

OLD CROW

He comes from the shades
  Of his wood very early,
And works in the blades
  Of the wheat and the barley,
And he's happy, although
He's a grumbleton crow.

The larks have devices
  For sunny delight,
And the sheep in their fleeces
  Are woolly and white;
But these things are the scorn
Of the bird in the corn.

And morning goes by
  And still he is there,
Till a rose in the sky
  Calls him back to his lair
In the boughs, where the gloom
Is a part of his plume.

But the boy in the lane
  With his gun, by and by,
To the heart of the grain
  Will narrowly spy,
And the twilight will come,
And no crow will fly home.

JOHN DRINKWATER

THE CROW

With rakish eye and plenished crop,
Oblivious of the farmer's gun,
Upon the naked ash-tree top
The Crow sits basking in the sun.

An old ungodly rogue, I wot!
For, perched in black against the blue,
His feathers, torn with beak and shot,
Let woeful glints of April through.

The year's new grass, and, golden-eyed,
The daisies sparkle underneath,
And chestnut-trees on either side
Have opened every ruddy sheath.

But doubtful still of frost and snow,
The ash alone stands stark and bare,
And on its topmost twig the Crow
Takes the glad morning's sun and air.

WILLIAM CANTON

HIAWATHA AND MUDJEKEEWIS

Out of childhood into manhood
Now had grown my Hiawatha,
Skilled in all the craft of hunters,

Learned in all the lore of old men,
In all youthful sports and pastimes,
In all manly arts and labours.
  Swift of foot was Hiawatha;
He could shoot an arrow from him,
And run forward with such fleetness,
That the arrow fell behind him!
Strong of arm was Hiawatha;
He could shoot ten arrows upward,
Shoot them with such strength and swiftness,
That the tenth had left the bow-string
Ere the first to earth had fallen!
  He had mittens, Minjekahwun,
Magic mittens made of deer-skin;
When upon his hands he wore them,
He could smite the rocks asunder,
He could grind them into powder.
He had moccasins[1] enchanted,
Magic moccasins of deer-skin;
When he bound them round his ankles,
When upon his feet he tied them,
At each stride a mile he measured!
  Much he questioned old Nokomis
Of his father Mudjekeewis;
Learned from her the fatal secret
Of the beauty of his mother,
Of the falsehood of his father;
And his heart was hot within him,

[1] Shoes made of soft leather.

Like a living coal his heart was.
  Then he said to old Nokomis,
"I will go to Mudjekeewis,
See how fares it with my father,
At the doorways of the West-Wind,
At the portals of the Sunset!"
  From his lodge went Hiawatha,
Dressed for travel, armed for hunting;
Dressed in deer-skin shirt and leggings,
Richly wrought with quills and wampum;[1]
On his head his eagle-feathers,
Round his waist his belt of wampum,
In his hand his bow of ash-wood,
Strung with sinews of the reindeer;
In his quiver oaken arrows,
Tipped with jasper, winged with feathers;
With his mittens, Minjekahwun,
With his moccasins enchanted.
  Warning said the old Nokomis
"Go not forth, O Hiawatha!
To the kingdom of the West-Wind,
To the realms of Mudjekeewis,
Lest he harm you with his magic,
Lest he kill you with his cunning!"
  But the fearless Hiawatha
Heeded not her woman's warning;
Forth he strode into the forest,
At each stride a mile he measured;

[1] Shells or beads.

Lurid seemed the sky above him,
Lurid seemed the earth beneath him,
Hot and close the air around him,
Filled with smoke and fiery vapours,
As of burning woods and prairies,
For his heart was hot within him,
Like a living coal his heart was.
So he journeyed westward, westward,
Left the fleetest deer behind him,
Left the antelope and bison;[1]
Crossed the rushing Esconaba,
Crossed the mighty Mississippi,
Passed the Mountains of the Prairie,
Passed the land of Crows and Foxes,
Passed the dwellings of the Blackfeet,
Came unto the Rocky Mountains,
To the kingdom of the West-Wind,
Where upon the gusty summits
Sat the ancient Mudjekeewis,
Ruler of the winds of heaven.
Filled with awe was Hiawatha
At the aspect of his father.
On the air about him wildly
Tossed and streamed his cloudy tresses,
Gleamed like drifting snow his tresses,
Glared like Ishkoodah, the comet,
Like the star with fiery tresses.
Filled with joy was Mudjekeewis

[1] American buffalo.

When he looked on Hiawatha,
Saw his youth rise up before him
In the face of Hiawatha,
Saw the beauty of Wenonah
From the grave rise up before him.
  "Welcome!" said he, "Hiawatha,
To the kingdom of the West-Wind!
Long have I been waiting for you!
Youth is lovely, age is lonely,
Youth is fiery, age is frosty;
You bring back the days departed,
You bri[illegible] passion,
[illegible]"
[illegible]ther,
[illegible] listened, waited, answered;
Much the mighty Mudjekeewis
Boasted of his ancient prowess,
Of his perilous adventures,
His indomitable courage,
His invulnerable body.
  Patiently sat Hiawatha,
Listening to his father's boasting;
With a smile he sat and listened,
Uttered neither threat nor menace,
Neither word nor look betrayed him,
But his heart was hot within him,
Like a living coal his heart was.
  Then he said, "O Mudjekeewis,
Is there nothing that can harm you?

Nothing that you are afraid of?"
And the mighty Mudjekeewis,
Grand and gracious in his boasting,
Answered, saying, "There is nothing,
Nothing but the black rock yonder,
Nothing but the fatal Wawbeek!"
And he looked at Hiawatha
With a wise look and benignant,
With a countenance paternal,
Looked with pride upon the beauty
Of his tall and graceful figure,
Saying, "O my Hiawatha!
Is there anything can harm you?
Anything you are afraid of?"
But the wary Hiawatha
Paused awhile, as if uncertain,
Held his peace, as if resolving,
And then answered, "There is nothing,
Nothing but the bulrush yonder,
Nothing but the great Apukwa!"
And as Mudjekeewis, rising,
Stretched his hand to pluck the bulrush,
Hiawatha cried in terror,
Cried in well-dissembled terror,
"Kago! kago! do not touch it!"
"Ah, kaween!" said Mudjekeewis,
"No indeed, I will not touch it!"
Then they talked of other matters;
First of Hiawatha's brothers,

First of Wabun, of the East-Wind,
Of the South-Wind, Shawondasee,
Of the North, Kabibonokka;
Then of Hiawatha's mother,
Of the beautiful Wenonah,
Of her birth upon the meadow,
Of her death, as Old Nokomis
Had remembered and related.
And he cried, "O Mudjekeewis,
It was you who killed Wenonah,
Took her young life and her beauty,
Broke the Lily of the Prairie,
Trampled it beneath your footsteps;
You confess it! you confess it!"
And the mighty Mudjekeewis
Tossed upon the wind his tresses,
Bowed his hoary head in anguish,
With a silent nod assented
Then up started Hiawatha,
And with threatening look and gesture
Laid his hand upon the black rock,
On the fatal Wawbeek laid it,
With his mittens, Minjekahwun,
Rent the jutting crag asunder,
Smote and crushed it into fragments,
Hurled them madly at his father,
The remorseful Mudjekeewis,
For his heart was hot within him,
Like a living coal his heart was.

But the ruler of the West-Wind
Blew the fragments backward from him
With the breathing of his nostrils,
With the tempest of his anger,
Blew them back at his assailant;
Seized the bulrush, the Apukwa,
Dragged it with its roots and fibres
From the margin of the meadow,
From its ooze, the giant bulrush;
Long and loud laughed Hiawatha!
Then began the deadly conflict,
Hand to hand among the mountains;
From his eyrie screamed the eagle.
The Keneu, the great war-eagle,
Sat upon the crags around them,
Wheeling flapped his wings above them.
Like a tall tree in the tempest
Bent and lashed the giant bulrush;
And in masses huge and heavy
Crashing fell the fatal Wawbeek;
Till the earth shook with the tumult
And confusion of the battle,
And the air was full of shoutings,
And the thunder of the mountains,
Starting, answered, "Baim-wawa!"
Back retreated Mudjekeewis,
Rushing westward o'er the mountains,
Stumbling westward down the mountains,
Three whole days retreated fighting,

Still pursued by Hiawatha
To the doorways of the West-Wind,
To the portals of the Sunset,
To the earth's remotest border,
Where into the empty spaces
Sinks the sun, as a flamingo
Drops into her nest at nightfall
In the melancholy marshes.
"Hold!" at length cried Mudjekeewis,
"Hold, my son, my Hiawatha!
'Tis impossible to kill me,
For you cannot kill the immortal.
I have put you to this trial,
But to know and prove your courage;
Now receive the prize of valour'
"Go back to your home and people,
Live among them, toil among them,
Cleanse the earth from all that harms it,
Clear the fishing-grounds and rivers,
Slay all monsters and magicians,
All the Wendigoes, the giants,
All the serpents, the Kenabeeks,
As I slew the Mishe-Mokwa,
Slew the Great Bear of the mountains.
"And at last when Death draws near you,
When the awful eyes of Pauguk
Glare upon you in the darkness,
I will share my kingdom with you,
Ruler shall you be thenceforward

Of the Northwest-Wind, Keewaydin,
Of the home-wind, the Keewaydin."
  Thus was fought that famous battle
In the dreadful days of Shah-shah,
In the days long since departed,
In the kingdom of the West-Wind.
Still the hunter sees its traces
Scattered far o'er hill and valley;
Sees the giant bulrush growing
By the ponds and water-courses,
Sees the masses of the Wawbeek
Lying still in every valley.
  Homeward now went Hiawatha;
Pleasant was the landscape round him,
Pleasant was the air above him,
For the bitterness of anger
Had departed wholly from him,
From his brain the thought of vengeance,
From his heart the burning fever.
  Only once his pace he slackened,
Only once he paused or halted,
Paused to purchase heads of arrows
Of the ancient Arrow-maker,
In the land of the Dacotahs,
Where the Falls of Minnehaha
Flash and gleam among the oak-trees,
Laugh and leap into the valley.
  There the ancient Arrow-maker
Made his arrow-heads of sandstone,

Arrow-heads of chalcedony,[1]
Arrow-heads of flint and jasper,[2]
Smoothed and sharpened at the edges,
Hard and polished, keen and costly.
  With him dwelt his dark-eyed daughter,
Wayward as the Minnehaha,
With her moods of shade and sunshine,
Eyes that smiled and frowned alternate,
Feet as rapid as the river,
Tresses flowing as the water,
And as musical a laughter:
And he named her from the river,
From the waterfall he named her,
Minnehaha, Laughing Water.
Was it then for heads of arrows,
Arrow-heads of chalcedony,
Arrow-heads of flint and jasper,
That my Hiawatha halted,
In the land of the Dacotahs?
  Was it not to see the maiden,
See the face of Laughing Water
Peeping from behind the curtain,
Hear the rustling of her garments
From behind the waving curtain,
As one sees the Minnehaha
Gleaming, glancing through the branches,
As one hears the Laughing Water

[1] A white or bluish-white stone.
[2] A precious stone.

From behind its screen of branches?
  Who shall say what thoughts and visions
Fill the fiery brains of young men?
Who shall say what dreams of beauty
Filled the heart of Hiawatha?
All he *told to old Nokomis,*
When he reached the lodge at sunset,
Was the meeting with his father,
Was his fight with Mudjekeewis;
Not a word he said of arrows,
Not a word of Laughing Water.

H. W. LONGFELLOW

SIR HUGH OF LINCOLN

Four and twenty bonny boys
  Were playing at the ba',
And wi' them was the sweet Sir Hugh,
  And he played o'er them a'.

He kicked the ba' then wi' his foot,
  And catchd it wi' his knee,
And throuch-and-thro the Jew's window
  He gart[1] the bonnie ba' flee.

Then out and cam' the Jew's daughter—
  " Will ye come in and dine? "
" I winna come in, and I canna come in,
  Without my play-feres nine."

[1] Made.

"Throw down the ba', ye Jew's daughter,
  Throw down the ba' to me!"
"Never a bit," says the Jew's daughter,
  "'Till up to me come ye."

"How will I come up? How can I come up?
  How can I come to thee?
For as ye did to my auld father,
  The same ye'll do to me."

She's gane till her father's garden,
  An pu'd an apple red and green;
'Twas a' to wyle him—sweet Sir Hugh,
  And to entice him in

She's led him in through ae dark door,
  And sae has she thro nine;
She's laid him on a dressing-table,
  And stickit him like a swine.

And first came out the thick, thick blood,
  And syne came out the thin,
And syne came out the bonny heart's blood;
  There was nae mair within.

She's rowd him in a cake o' lead,
  Bade him lie still and sleep;
She's thrown him in Our Lady's draw-well,
  Was fifty fathom deep.

When bells were rung, and mass was sung,
And a' the bairns came hame,
When every lady gat hame her son,
The Lady Maisry gat nane.

She's ta'en her mantle her about,
Her coffer[1] by the hand,
And she's gane out to seek her son,
And wander'd o'er the land.

She's doen her to the Jew's castell,
Where a' were fast asleep:
"Gin ye be there, my sweet Sir Hugh,
I pray you to me speak."

She's doen her to the Jew's garden,
Thought he had been gathering fruit:
"Gin ye be there, my sweet Sir Hugh,
I pray you to me speak!"

She near'd Our Lady's deep draw-well,
Was fifty fathom deep:
"Whare'er ye be, my sweet Sir Hugh,
I pray you to me speak."

"Gae hame, gae hame, my mither dear,
Prepare my winding sheet,
And at the birks[2] o' merry Lincoln
The morn I will you meet."

1 Box for keeping treasure.
2 Birch-trees.

Now Lady Maisry is gane hame,
  Made him a winding sheet,
And at the birks o' merry Lincoln
  The dead corpse did her meet.

And a' the bells o' merry Lincoln
  Without men's hands were rung,
And a' the books o' merry Lincoln
  Were read without man's tongue.

When bells were rung, and mass was sung
  And a' men bound for bed,
Every mither had her son,
  But sweet Sir Hugh was dead.

ANONYMOU

THE OLD SOLDIER

There came an old Soldier to my door,
Asked a crust, and asked no more;
The wars had thinned him very bare,
Fighting and marching everywhere,
    With a Fol rol dol rol di do.

With nose stuck out, and cheek sunk in,
A bristling beard upon his chin—
Powder and bullets and wounds and drums
Had come to that Soldier as suchlike comes—
    With a Fol rol dol rol di do.

'Twas sweet and fresh with buds of May,
Flowers springing from every spray;
And when he had supped the Old Soldier trolled
The song of youth that never grows old
Called Fol rol dol rol di do.

Most of him rags, and all of him lean,
And the belt round his belly drawn tightsome in,
He lifted his peaked old grizzled head,
And these were the very same words he said—
A Fol-rol-dol-rol-*di*-do.

WALTER DE LA MARE

HERVÉ RIEL

On the sea and at the Hogue, sixteen hundred and ninety-two,
Did the English fight the French,—woe to France!
And, the thirty-first of May, helter-skelter through the blue,
Like a crowd of frightened porpoises a shoal of sharks pursue,
Came crowding ship on ship to Saint-Malo on the Rance,
With the English fleet in view.

'Twas the squadron that escaped, with the victor in full chase;
First and foremost of the drove, in his great ship, Damfreville;

Close on him fled, great and small,
Twenty-two good ships in all;
And they signalled to the place
"Help the winners of a race!
Get us guidance, give us harbour, take us quick—or, quicker still,
Here's the English can and will!"

Then the pilots of the place put out brisk and leapt on board;
"Why, what hope or chance have ships like these to pass?" laughed they:
"Rocks to starboard, rocks to port, all the passage scarred and scored—
Shall the *Formidable* here, with her twelve and eighty guns,
Think to make the river-mouth by the single narrow way,
Trust to enter—where 'tis ticklish for a craft of twenty tons,
And with flow at full beside?
Now, 'tis slackest ebb of tide
Reach the mooring? Rather say,
While rock stands or water runs,
Not a ship will leave the bay!"

Then was called a council straight.
Brief and bitter the debate
"Here's the English at our heels; would you have them take in tow

All that's left us of the fleet, linked together stern
and bow,
For a prize to Plymouth Sound?
Better run the ships aground!"
(Ended Damfreville his speech).
"Not a minute more to wait!
Let the Captains all and each
Shove ashore, then blow up, burn the vessels on
the beach!
France must undergo her fate.

"Give the word!" But no such word
Was ever spoke or heard;
For up stood, for out stepped, for in struck amid
all these—
A Captain? A Lieutenant? A Mate—first, second,
third?
No such man of mark, and meet
With his betters to compete!
But a simple Breton sailor pressed by Tourville for
the fleet,
A poor coasting-pilot he, Hervé Riel the Croi-
sickese.

And, "What mockery or malice have we here?"
cries Hervé Riel:
"Are you mad, you Malouins? Are you cowards,
fools, or rogues?
Talk to me of rocks and shoals, me who took the
soundings, tell

On my fingers every bank, every shallow, every swell
'Twixt the offing here and Grève where the river disembogues?[1]
Are you bought by English gold? Is it love the lying's for?
Morn and eve, night and day,
Have I piloted your bay,
Entered free and anchored fast at the foot of Solidor.
Burn the fleet and ruin France? That were worse than fifty Hogues!
Sirs, they know I speak the truth! Sirs, believe me there's a way!

"Only let me lead the line,
Have the biggest ship to steer,
Get this *Formidable* clear,
Make the others follow mine,
And I lead them, most and least, by a passage I know well,
Right to Solidor past Grève,
And there lay them safe and sound;
And if one ship misbehave,—
Keel so much as grate the ground—
Why, I've nothing but my life,—here's my head!" cries Hervé Riel.

Not a minute more to wait.
"Steer us in, then, small and great!

[1] Falls into the sea.

Take the helm, lead the line, save the squadron!"
cried its chief.
Captains, give the sailor place!
He is Admiral, in brief.
Still the north wind, by God's grace!
See the noble fellow's face,
As the big ship, with a bound,
Clears the entry like a hound,
Keeps the passage, as its inch of way were the wide
sea's profound!
See, safe thro' shoal and rock,
How they follow in a flock,
Not a ship that misbehaves, not a keel that grates the
ground,
Not a spar that comes to grief!
The peril, see, is past,
All are harboured to the last,
And just as Hervé Riel hollas "Anchor!"—sure as
fate,
Up the English come—too late!

So, the storm subsides to calm:
They see the green trees wave
On the heights o'erlooking Grève.
Hearts that bled are staunch'd with balm,
"Just our rapture to enhance,
Let the English rake the bay,
Gnash their teeth and glare askance
As they cannonade away!

'Neath rampired Solidor pleasant riding on the
Rance!"
Now hope succeeds despair on each Captain's countenance!
Out burst all with one accord,
"This is Paradise for Hell!
Let France, let France's King
Thank the man that did the thing!"
What a shout, and all one word,
"Hervé Riel!"
As he stepped in front once more,
Not a symptom of surprise
In the frank blue Breton eyes,
Just the same man as before.

Then said Damfreville, "My friend,
I must speak out at the end,
Though I find the speaking hard.
Praise is deeper than the lips
You have saved the King his ships,
You must name your own reward.
'Faith our sun was near eclipse!
Demand whate'er you will,
France remains your debtor still
Ask to heart's content and have! or my name's not
Damfreville"

Then a beam of fun outbroke
On the bearded mouth that spoke,

As the honest heart laughed through
Those frank eyes of Breton blue:
"Since I needs must say my say,
Since on board the duty's done,
And from Malo Roads to Croisic Point, what is it
but a run?—
Since 'tis ask and have, I may—
Since the others go ashore—
Come! A good whole holiday!
Leave to go and see my wife, whom I call th
Belle Aurore!"
That he asked, and that he got—nothing more.

Name and deed alike are lost:
Not a pillar nor a post
In his Croisic keeps alive the feat as it befell;
Not a head in white and black
On a single fishing smack,
In memory of the man but for whom had gon
wrack
All that France saved from the fight wh
England bore the bell.
Go to Paris, rank on rank
Search the heroes flung pell-mell
On the Louvre, face and flank!
You shall look long enough ere you come to
Riel.
So, for better and for worse,
Hervé Riel, accept my verse!

In my verse, Hervé Riel, do thou once more
Save the squadron, honour France, love thy wife, the
    Belle Aurore.

ROBERT BROWNING

THE DONG WITH A LUMINOUS NOSE

When awful darkness and silence reign
Over the great Gromboolian plain,
  Through the long, long, wintry nights;—
    When the angry breakers roar,
    As they beat on the rocky shore;—
  When Storm-clouds brood on the towering heights
    Of the Hills of the Chankly Bore.—

Then, through the vast and gloomy dark,
There moves what seems a fiery spark,
  A lonely spark with silvery rays
    Piercing the coal-black night,—
    A meteor strange and bright:—
  Hither and thither the vision strays,
    A single lurid light.

Slowly it wanders,—pauses,—creeps,—
Anon it sparkles—flashes and leaps;
[illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible] hour
From Hall or Terrace, or lofty Tower,

Cry, as the wild light passes along,—
"The Dong!—the Dong!
"The wandering Dong through the forest goes!
"The Dong!—the Dong!
"The Dong with a luminous Nose!"

Long years ago
The Dong was happy and gay,
Till he fell in love with a Jumbly Girl
Who came to those shores one day.
For the Jumblies came in a Sieve, they did,—
Landing at eve near the Zemmery Fidd
Where the Oblong Oysters grow,
And the rocks are smooth and gray.
And all the woods and the valleys rang
With the Chorus they daily and nightly sang,—
"*Far and few, far and few,*
Are the lands where the Jumblies live;
Their heads are green and their hands are blue,
And they went to sea in a sieve."

Happily, happily passed those days!
While the cheerful Jumblies staid;
They danced in circlets all night long,
To the plaintive pipe of the lively Dong,
In the moonlight, shine or shade.
For day and night he was always there
By the side of the Jumbly Girl so fair,
With her sky-blue hands, and her sea-green hair.
Till the morning came of that hateful day

When the Jumblies sailed in their sieve away,
And the Dong was left on the cruel shore
[illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible]n,—
Singing the Jumbly Chorus still
As he sate all day on the grassy hill,—
  "Far and few, far and few,
    Are the lands where the Jumblies live;
    Their heads are green, and their hands are blue,
    And they went to sea in a sieve."

But when the sun was low in the West,
  The Dong arose and said,—
  "What little sense I once possessed
  Has quite gone out of my head!"
And since that day he wanders still
By lake and forest, marsh and hill,
Singing—"O somewhere, in valley or plain
Might I find my Jumbly Girl again!
For ever I'll seek by lake and shore
Till I find my Jumbly Girl once more!"

    Playing a pipe with silvery squeaks,
    Since then his Jumbly Girl he seeks.
    And because by night he could not see,
    He gathered the bark of the Twangum Tree
      On the flowery plain that grows
      And he wove him a wondrous Nose,—
    A Nose as strange as a Nose could be!

Of vast proportions and painted red,
And tied with cords to the back of his head.
    —In a hollow rounded space it ended
    With a luminous lamp within suspended,
        All fenced about
        With a bandage stout
        To prevent the wind from blowing it out;—
    And with holes all round to send the light,
    In gleaming rays on the dismal night.

And now each night, and all night long,
Over those plains still roams the Dong;
And above the wail of the Chimp and Snipe
You may hear the squeak of his plaintive pipe
While ever he seeks, but seeks in vain
To meet with his Jumbly Girl again;
Lonely and wild—all night he goes,—
The Dong with a luminous Nose!
And all who watch at the midnight hour,
From Hall or Terrace, or lofty Tower,
Cry, as they trace the Meteor bright,
Moving along through the dreary night,—
    "This is the hour when forth he goes,
    The Dong with a luminous Nose!
    Yonder—over the plain he goes;
        He goes!
        He goes;
    The Dong with a luminous Nose!"

EDWARD LEAR

THE WAR SONG OF DINAS VAWR

The mountain sheep are sweeter,
  But the valley sheep are fatter;
We therefore deemed it meeter
  To carry off the latter.
We made an expedition;
  We met a host, and quelled it;
We forced a strong position,
  And killed the men who held it.

On Dyfed's richest valley,
  Where herds of kine were browsing,
We made a mighty sally
  To furnish our carousing.
Fierce warriors rushed to meet us;
  We met them, and o'erthrew them:
They struggled hard to beat us;
  But we conquered them, and slew them.

As we drove our prize at leisure,
  The king marched forth to catch us:
His rage surpassed all measure,
  But his people could not match us.
He fled to his hall-pillars;
  And, ere our force we led off,
Some sacked his house and cellars,
  While others cut his head off.

We there, in strife bewildering,
  Spilt blood enough to swim in:
We orphaned many children,
  And widowed many women.
The eagles and the ravens
  We glutted with our foemen;
The heroes and the cravens,
  The spearmen and the bowmen.

We brought away from battle,
  And much their land bemoaned them,
Two thousand head of cattle,
  And the head of him who owned them:
Ednyfed, King of Dyfed,
  His head was borne before us;
His wine and beasts supplied our feasts,
  And his overthrow, our chorus.

T. L. PEACO(

AUTUMN

The thistle down's flying, though the winds are
    still,
On the green grass now lying, now mounting the
The spring from the fountain now boils like a
Through stones past the counting it bubbles red·

The ground parched and cracked is like overbaked
bread,
The greensward all wracked is, bents dried up and
dead.
The fallow fields glitter like water indeed,
And gossamers twitter flung from weed unto weed.

Hill tops like hot iron glitter bright in the sun,
And the rivers we're eyeing burn to gold as they run;
Burning hot is the ground, liquid gold is the air;
Whoever looks round sees Eternity there.

JOHN CLARE

O WHAT IF THE FOWLER

(From "The Manx Song Book," by permission of Messrs Boosey & Co Ltd)

O what if the fowler my blackbird has taken?
The roses of dawn blossom over the sea;
Awaken, my blackbird, awaken, awaken,
And sing to me out of my red fuchsia tree!

O what if the fowler my blackbird has taken?
The sun lifts his head from the lap of the sea—
Awaken, my blackbird, awaken, awaken,
And sing to me out of my red fuchsia tree!

O what if the fowler my blackbird has taken?
The mountain grows white with the birds of the sea;
But down in my garden forsaken, forsaken,
I'll weep all the day by my red fuchsia tree!

CHARLES DALMON

THE FORSAKEN MERMAN

Come, dear children, let us away;
Down and away below!
Now my brothers call from the bay,
Now the great winds shoreward blow,
Now the salt tides seaward flow;
Now the wild white horses play,
Champ and chafe and toss in the spray.
Children dear, let us away!
This way, this way!

Call her once before you go—
Call once yet!
In a voice that she will know:
"Margaret! Margaret!"
Children's voices should be dear
(Call once more) to a mother's ear;
Children's voices, wild with pain—
Surely she will come again!
Call her once and come away;

This way, this way!
"*Mother dear, we cannot stay!*
The wild white horses foam and fret."
Margaret! Margaret!

Come, dear children, come away down;
Call no more!
One last look at the white-walled town,
And the little grey church on the windy shore,
Then come down!
She will not come though you call all day;
Come away, come away!

Children dear, was it yesterday
We heard the sweet bells over the bay?
In the caverns where we lay,
Through the surf and through the swell,
The far-off sound of a silver bell?
Sand-strewn caverns, cool and deep,
Where the winds are all asleep;
Where the spent lights quiver and gleam,
Where the salt weed sways in the stream,
Where the sea-beasts, ranged all round,
Feed in the ooze of their pasture-ground;
Where the sea-snakes coil and twine,
Dry their mail and bask in the brine;
Where great whales come sailing by,
Sail and sail, with unshut eye,
Round the world for ever and aye?

When did music come this way?
Children dear, was it yesterday?

Children dear, was it yesterday
(Call yet once) that she went away?
Once she sate with you and me,
On a red gold throne in the heart of the sea,
And the youngest sate on her knee.
She combed its bright hair, and she tended it well,
When down swung the sound of a far-off bell.
She sigh'd, she looked up through the clear green sea;
She said: "I must go, for my kinsfolk pray
In the little grey church on the shore to-day.
'Twill be Easter-time in the world—ah me!
And I lose my poor soul, Merman! here with thee."
I said: "Go up, dear heart, through the waves;
Say thy prayer, and come back to the kind sea-caves!"
She smiled, she went up through the surf in the bay.
Children dear, was it yesterday?

Children dear, were we long alone?
The sea grows stormy, the little ones moan;
"Long prayers," I said, "in the world they say;
Come!" I said; and we rose through the surf in the bay.
We went up the beach, by the sandy down
Where the sea-stocks bloom, to the white-walled town;
Through the narrow paved streets, where all was still,

To the little grey church on the windy hill.
From the church came a murmur of folk at their
    prayers,
But we stood without in the cold blowing airs.
We climb'd on the graves, on the stones worn with
    rains,
And we gazed up the aisle through the small leaded
    panes.
She sate by the pillar; we saw her clear:
Margaret, hist! come quick, we are here!
"Dear heart," I said, "we are long alone;
The sea grows stormy, the little ones moan."
But, ah, she gave me never a look,
For her eyes were seal'd to the holy book!
Loud prays the priest; shut stands the door.
Come away, children, call no more!
Come away, come down, call no more!

  Down, down, down!
Down to the depths of the sea!
She sits at her wheel in the humming town,
Singing most joyfully.
Hark what she sings: "O joy, O joy,
For the humming street, and the child with its toy!
For the priest, and the bell, and the holy well;
For the wheel where I spun,
And the blessed light of the sun!"
And so she sings her fill,
Singing most joyfully,

Till the spindle drops from her hand,
And the whizzing wheel stands still.
She steals to the window, and looks at the sand,
And over the sand at the sea;
And her eyes are set in a stare;
And anon there breaks a sigh;
And anon there drops a tear,
From a sorrow-clouded eye,
And a heart sorrow-laden,
  A long, long sigh;
For the cold strange eyes of a little Mermaiden
  And the gleam of her golden hair.

  Come away, away children;
Come, children, come down!
The hoarse wind blows coldly;
Lights shine in the town.
She will start from her slumber
When gusts shake the door;
She will hear the winds howling,
Will hear the waves roar,
We shall see, while above us
The waves roar and whirl,
A ceiling of amber,
A pavement of pearl.
Singing: " Here came a mortal,
But faithless was she!
And alone dwell for ever
The kings of the sea."

But, children, at midnight,
When soft the winds blow,
When clear falls the moonlight,
When spring-tides are low;
When sweet airs come seaward
From heaths starr'd with broom,
And high rocks throw mildly
On the blanch'd sands a gloom;
Up the still, glistening beaches,
Up the creeks we will hie,
Over banks of bright seaweed
The ebb-tide leaves dry.
We will gaze, from the sand-hills,
At the white, sleeping town;
At the church on the hill-side—
And then come back down.
Singing: "There dwells a loved one,
But cruel is she!
She left lonely for ever
The kings of the sea."

MATTHEW ARNOLD

A DRAGON

(From "The Faerie Queene")

By this the dreadful Beast drew nigh to hand,
Half flying and half footing in his haste,

That with his largeness measurèd much land
And made wide shadow under his huge waist,
As mountain doth the valley overcast.
Approaching nigh, he rearèd high afore
His body monstrous, horrible, and vast;
Which to increase his wondrous greatness more,
Was swollen with wrath, and poison, and with
bloody gore;

And over all with brazen scales was armed,
Like plated coat of steel, so crouchèd[1] near
That nought might pierce, nor might his corse[2] be
harmed
With dint of sword nor push of pointed spear;
Which, as an eagle, seeing prey appear,
His aery plumes doth rouse, full rudely dight;[3]
So shakèd he, that horror was to hear:
For as the clashing of an armour bright,
Such noise his rousèd scales did send unto the
Knight.

His flaggy wings, when forth he did display,
Were like two sails, in which the hollow wind
Is gathered full, and worketh speedy way;
And eke the pennes[4] that did his pinions bind,
Were like main-yards with flying canvas lined;

[1] Laid so close to each other.
[2] Body.
[3] Arranged.
[4] Feathers.

With which whenas him list[1] the air to beat
And there by force unwonted passage find,
The clouds before him fled for terror great,
And all the heavens stood still amazèd with his
threat.

His huge long tail, wound up in hundred folds,
Does overspread his long brass-scaly back,
Whose wreathèd boughts[2] whenever he unfolds
And thick entangled knots adown does slack,
Bespotted as with shields of red and black,
It sweepeth all the land behind him far,
And
And
Both eedeth far.

His blazing eyes, like two bright shining shields,
Did burn with wrath, and sparkled living fire:
As two broad beacons, set in open fields,
Send forth their flames far off to every shire,
And warning give, that enemies conspire
With fire and sword the region to invade;
So flamed his eyes with rage and rancorous ire:
But far within, as in a hollow glade,
Those glaring lamps were set, that made a dreadful
shade.

[1] Wished.
[2] Folds.

So dreadfully he towárds him did pace,
Forè-lifting up alóft his speckled breast,
And often bounding on the bruisèd grass,
As for great joyance of his newcome guest.

EDMUND SPENSER

THE BLIND MEN AND THE ELEPHANT

A Hindoo Fable

It was six men of Hindostan,
  To learning much inclined,
Who went to see the Elephant
  (Though all of them were blind);
That each by observation
  Might satisfy his mind.

The *first* approached the Elephant,
  And happening to fall
Against his broad and sturdy side,
  At once began to bawl:
" Bless me, it seems the Elephant
  Is very like a wall! "

The *second*, feeling of the tusk,
  Cried, " Ho! what have we here
So very round and smooth and sharp?
  To me 'tis mighty clear

This wonder of an Elephant
  Is very like a spear!"

The *third* approached the animal,
  And happening to take
The squirming trunk within his hands,
  Then boldly up and spake:
"I see," quoth he, "the Elephant
  Is very like a snake!"

The *fourth* stretched out his eager hand
  And felt about the knee,
"What most this mighty beast is like
  Is mighty plain," quoth he;
"'Tis clear enough the Elephant
  Is very like a tree!"

The *fifth*, who chanced to touch the ear,
  Said, "E'en the blindest man
Can tell what this resembles most;
  Deny the fact who can,
This marvel of an Elephant
  Is very like a fan!"

The *sixth* no sooner had begun
  About the beast to grope,
Than, seizing on the swinging tail
  That fell within his scope,
"I see," said he, "the Elephant
  Is very like a rope!"

And so these men of Hindostan
Disputed loud and long,
Each in his own opinion
Exceeding stiff and strong,
Though each was partly in the right,
And all were in the wrong!

JOHN G. SAXE

BEGGAR'S SONG

Come! come away! the Spring,
By every bird that can but sing
Or chirp a note, doth now invite
Us forth to taste of his delight.
In field, in grove, on hill, in dale;
But above all the nightingale,
Who in her sweetness strives to outdo
The loudness of the hoarse cuckoo.

Cuckoo! cries he; jug, jug, jug! sings she,
From bush to bush, from tree to tree.
Why in one place then tarry we?

Come away! Why do we stay?
We have no debt or rent to pay;
No bargains or accounts to make;
Nor land, nor lease, to let or take.

Or if we had, should that remote us,
When all the world's our own before us?
And where we pass and make resort,
It is our kingdom and our court.

Cuckoo! cries he; jug, jug, jug! sings she,
From bush to bush, from tree to tree.
Why in one place then tarry we?

RICHARD BROME

THE WINDMILL

If you should bid me make a choice
'Twixt wind and water mill,
In spite of all the millpond's charms
I'd take those gleaming, sweeping arms
High on a windy hill.

The miller stands before his door
And whistles for a breeze;
And, when it comes, his sails go round
With such a mighty rushing sound
You think of heavy seas.

And if the wind declines to blow
The miller takes a nap
(Although he'd better spend an hour
In brushing at the dust and flour
That line his coat and cap.)

Now, if a water-mill were his,
  Such rest he'd never know,
For round and round his crashing wheel,
His dashing, splashing, plashing wheel,
  Unceasingly would go.

So, if you'd bid me take a choice
  'Twixt wind and water mill,
In spite of all a millpond's charms,
I'd take those gleaming, sweeping arms
  High on the windy hill.

E. V. LUCAS

QUAIL'S NEST

I wandered out one rainy day
  And heard a bird with merry joys
Cry " wet my foot " for half the way;
  I stood and wondered at the noise,

When from my foot a bird did flee—
  The rain flew bouncing from her breast—
I wondered what the bird could be,
  And almost trampled on her nest.

The nest was full of eggs and round—
  I met a shepherd in the vales,
And stood to tell him what I found.
  He knew and said it was a quail's,

For he himself the nest had found,
  Among the wheat and on the green,
When going on his daily round,
  With eggs as many as fifteen.

Among the stranger birds they feed,
  Their summer flight is short and low;
There's very few know where they breed,
  And scarcely any where they go.

JOHN CLARE

THE PIPES AT LUCKNOW

Pipes of the misty moorlands,
  Voice of the glens and hills;
The droning of the torrents,
  The treble of the rills!
Not the braes[1] of broom and heather,
  Nor the mountains dark with rain,
Nor maiden bower, nor border tower,
  Have heard your sweetest strain!

Dear to the Lowland reaper,
  And plaided mountaineer,—
To the cottage and the castle
  The Scottish pipes are dear;—

[1] Hill-slopes.

Sweet sounds the ancient pibroch
  O'er mountain, loch, and glade;
But the sweetest of all music
  The pipes at Lucknow played.

Day by day the Indian tiger
  Louder yelled, and nearer crept;
Round and round the jungle-serpent
  Near and nearer circles swept.
"Pray for rescue, wives and mothers,—
  Pray to-day!" the soldier said;
"To-morrow, death's between us
  And the wrong and shame we dread."

Oh, they listened, looked, and waited,
  Till their hope became despair;
And the sobs of low bewailing
  Filled the pauses of their prayer.
Then up spake a Scottish maiden,
  With her ear unto the ground:
"Dinna ye hear it?—dinna ye hear it?
  The pipes of Havelock sound!"

Hushed the wounded man his groaning;
  Hushed the wife her little ones;
Alone they heard the drum-roll
  And the roar of Sepoy[1] guns.

[1] An Indian soldier.

But to sounds of home and childhood
  The Highland ear was true;—
As her mother's cradle-crooning
  The mountain pipes she knew.

Like the march of soundless music
  Through the vision of the seer,
More of feeling than of hearing,
  Of the heart than of the ear,
She knew the droning pibroch,
  She knew the Campbell's call:
"Hark! hear ye no' MacGregor's,—
  The grandest o' them all!"

Oh, they listened, dumb and breathless,
  And they caught the sound at last;
Faint and far beyond the Goomtee
  Rose and fell the piper's blast!
Then a burst of wild thanksgiving
  Mingled woman's voice and man's;
"God be praised!—the march of Havelock!
  The piping of the clans!"

Louder, nearer, fierce as vengeance,
  Sharp and shrill as swords at strife,
Came the wild MacGregor's clan-call,
  Stinging all the air to life.
But when the far-off dust-cloud
  To plaided legions grew,

Full tenderly and blithesomely
  The pipes of rescue blew!

Round the silver domes of Lucknow,
  Moslem mosque and Pagan shrine,
Breathed the air to Britons dearest,
  The air of Auld Lang Syne.
O'er the cruel roll of war-drums
  Rose that sweet and home-like strain:
And the tartan clove the turban,
  As the Goomtee cleaves the plain.

Dear to the corn-land reaper
  And plaided mountaineer,—
To the cottage and the castle
  The piper's song is dear.
Sweet sounds the Gaelic pibroch
  O'er mountain, glen and glade;
But the sweetest of all music
  The Pipes at Lucknow played!

JOHN GREENLEAF WH

THE BELLS

Hear the sledges with the bells—
Silver bells!
What a world of merriment their melody for
How they tinkle, tinkle, tinkle,
In the icy air of night!

While the stars that oversprinkle
All the heavens, seem to twinkle
With a crystalline delight;
Keeping time, time, time,
In a sort of Runic[1] *rhyme*,
To the tintinabulation that so musically wells
From the bells, bells, bells, bells,
Bells, bells, bells—
From the jingling and the tinkling of the bells.

Hear the mellow wedding bells,
Golden bells!
What a [illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible],
And all in tune,
What a liquid ditty floats
To the turtle-dove that listens, while she gloats
On the moon!
Oh, from out the sounding cells,
What a gush of euphony[2] voluminously wells!
How it swells!
How it dwells
On the Future! how it tells
Of the rapture that impels

[1] A song of the Norsemen, written in Runes, a special kind of writing.
[2] Pleasing sound.

To the swinging and the ringing
Of the bells, bells, bells,
Of the bells, bells, bells, bells,
Bells, bells, bells—
To the rhyming and chiming of the bells!

Hear the loud alarum bells—
Brazen bells!
What a tale of terror, now, their turbulency tells!
In the startled ear of night
How they scream out their affright!
Too much horrified to speak,
They can only shriek, shriek,
Out of tune,
In a clamorous appealing to the mercy of the fire,
In a mad expostulation with the deaf and frantic fire.
Leaping higher, higher, higher,
With a desperate desire,
And a resolute endeavour,
Now—now to sit or never,
By the side of the pale-faced moon.

Oh, the bells, bells, bells!
What a tale their terror tells
Of Despair!
How they clang, and clash, and roar!
What a horror they outpour
On the bosom of the palpitating air!

Yet the ear it fully knows,
By the twanging,
And the clanging,
How the danger ebbs and flows;
Yet the ear distinctly tells,
In the jangling,
And the wrangling,
How the danger sinks and swells,
By the sinking or the swelling in the anger of the bells—
Of the bells—
Of the bells, bells, bells, bells,
Bells, bells, bells—
In the clamour and the clangour of the bells!

Hear the tolling of the bells—
Iron bells!
What a world of solemn thought their monody[1] compels!
In the silence of the night,
How we shiver with affright
At the melancholy menace of their tone!
For every sound that floats
From the rust within their throats
Is a groan.
And the people—ah, the people—
They that dwell up in the steeple,
All alone,

[1] Monotonous sound.

And who tolling, tolling, tolling,
In that muffled monotone,
Feel a glory in so rolling
On the human heart a stone—
They are neither man nor woman—
They are neither brute nor human—
They are Ghouls:[1]
And their king it is who tolls;
And he rolls, rolls, rolls,
Rolls
A pæan[2] from the bells!
And his merry bosom swells
With the pæan of the bells!
And he dances, and he yells;
Keeping time, time, time,
In a sort of Runic rhyme,
To the pæan of the bells—
Of the bells:
Keeping time, time, time,
In a sort of Runic rhyme,
To the throbbing of the bells—
Of the bells, bells, bells—
To the sobbing of the bells;
Keeping time, time, time,
As he knells, knells, knells,
In a happy Runic rhyme,
To the rolling of the bells—

[1] Demons.
[2] Song of triumph.

Of the bells, bells, bells—
To the tolling of the bells,
Of the bells, bells, bells, bells—
Bells, bells, bells—
To the moaning and the groaning of the bells.

EDGAR ALLAN POE

A BOY'S SONG

With lifted feet, hands still,
I am poised, and down the hill
Dart, with heedful mind;
The air goes by in a wind.

Swifter and yet more swift,
Till the heart, with a mighty lift,
Makes the lungs laugh, the throat cry:—
"O bird, see; see, bird, I fly.

"Is this, is this your joy?
O bird, then I, though a boy,
For a golden moment share
Your feathery life in air!"

Say, heart, is there aught like this
In a world that is full of bliss?
'Tis more than skating, bound
Steel-shod to the level ground.

Speed slackens, now, I float
Awhile in my airy boat;
Till when the wheels scarce crawl,
My feet to the treadles fall.

Alas, that the longest hill
Must end in a vale; but still,
Who climbs with toil, wheresoe'er,
Shall find wings waiting there.

H. C. BEECHING

THE NECKAN

In summer, on the headlands,
  The Baltic Sea along,
Sits Neckan with his harp of gold,
  And sings his plaintive song.

Green rolls beneath the headlands,
  Green rolls the Baltic Sea;
And there, below the Neckan's feet,
  His wife and children be.

He sings not of the ocean,
  Its shells and roses pale;
Of earth, of earth the Neckan sings,
  He hath no other tale.

He sits upon the headlands,
  And sings a mournful stave
Of all he saw and felt on earth
  Far from the kind sea-wave.

Sings how, a knight, he wander'd
  By castle, field, and town—
But earthly knights have harder hearts
  Than the sea-children own.

Sings of his earthly bridal—
  Priests, knights, and ladies gay.
"—And who art thou," the priest began,
  "Sir Knight, who wedd'st to-day?"—

"—I am no knight," he answer'd;
  "From the sea-waves I come."—
The knights drew sword, the ladies scream'd,
  The surpliced priest stood dumb.

He sings how she sits weeping
  'Mid shells that round her lie.
"False Neckan shares my bed," she weeps;
  "No Christian mate have I."

He sings how through the billows
  He rose to earth again,
And sought a priest to sign the cross,
  That Neckan Heaven might gain.

He sings how, on an evening,
  Beneath the birch-trees cool,
He sate and play'd his harp of gold;
  Beside the river-pool.

Beside the pool sate Neckan—
  Tears fill'd his mild blue eye.
On his white mule, across the bridge,
  A cassock'd priest rode by.

"—Why sitt'st thou there, O Neckan,
  And play'st thy harp of gold?
Sooner shall this my staff bear leaves,
  Than thou shalt Heaven behold."—

The cassock'd priest rode onwards,
  And vanish'd with his mule;
And Neckan in the twilight grey
  Wept by the river-pool.

In summer, on the headlands,
  The Baltic Sea along,
Sits Neckan with his harp of gold,
  And sings this plaintive song.

MATTHEW ARN